

145161

JPRS-NEA-84-062

12 April 1984

Near East/South Asia Report

DTIC QUALITY INSPECTED 2

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12 April 1984

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GULF COUNTRIES, INDIA PLAN JOINT PROJECT

Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 8 Jan 84 p 13

[Text]

THE largest project in India's private sector in terms of foreign investment will go on stream in the second quarter of 1987 with 40 per cent equity from the Gulf under the country's liberalised scheme for investment from oil exporting developing countries.

Indo-Gulf Fertilisers and Chemicals Corporation Ltd., the Rs 6,520 million project with a capacity of 1,350 tons of ammonia and 2,250 tons of urea per day, will also be the largest manufacturing project in the private sector in terms of outlay, Mr S.C. Tripathi, managing director of the Pradeshia Industrial and Investment Corporation UP Ltd., (Picup), said in Sharjah yesterday.

Picup will have 11 per cent of the total equity of Rs 1,630 million while 40 per cent will be put up by Gulf Consolidated Company for Services and Industries (GCSI), a Bahrain-based company in which Sharjah's Bukhatir group has a substantial interest.

Of the remaining 49 per cent, two-fifths will be offered to non-resident

Indians. The non-resident issue of about Rs 320 million is expected to open only by March-April 1986, a year before commencement of production to avoid long gestation period for investors.

Mr Tripathi, who is in Sharjah along with Mr S.K. Modwel, industries secretary of Uttar Pradesh for a board meeting of the new venture, said details of the joint venture were finalised during visit by the state's chief minister to the UAE last year.

Since then, the project has proceeded according to schedule. One thousand acres of land has been acquired at Jagdishpur, 75 km from Lucknow. Water, electricity and other infrastructure facilities have been developed and discussions are now on with financial institutions.

Of the total cost, Rs 4,890 million is to be met through long-term loans. The foreign exchange component of the cost has been computed at Rs 1,685 million.

Contractors for the project will be Snamprogetti of Italy in association with Project and Development India Ltd., a public sector firm. The Italian firm will also supply process know-

how for urea and Haldor Topso of Denmark in the case of ammonia.

Mr Tripathi said the unit is located in an area which is 90 per cent agricultural and its products are expected to be used within a radius of 200 kilometres of the factory.

It will be run on gas piped from Bombay High to Jagdishpur, which will make the unit highly economical.

Officials from UP have already handed over about 100 project profiles to the India Investment Centre in Abu Dhabi. Some of the projects have generated considerable interest both among local investors and non-residents.

Among the schemes for which discussions are in progress are a Pthalic Anhydride project which will cost Rs 200 to 250 million, an aluminium foil project costing Rs 450 million and mini-hydel schemes of outlays ranging from Rs 150 to Rs 900 million.

Also on the drawing board are an automotive components plant, an electrical equipment unit and a precision measuring instruments project.

The two officials are to discuss details of possible joint venture arrangements on these schemes during their stay in the UAE.

UAE-IRAN IMPORT-EXPORT BUSINESS VIEWED

Dubayy KHALEEL TIMES in English 9 Jan 84 p 11

[Article: "Barter Is Right!"]

[Text]

A DRAMATIC change in the Iranian trade scene maybe defying hopes but that has not prevented the export division of an old company, set up barely 18 months ago, from carving out a niche for itself.

The export division of Mohebi Centre is claimed to have clocked up deals worth 20 million dollars during last year. And Dr Kashani-Akavan, who heads the division, aims at more this year.

He, as an Iranian, sees the location of Dubai close to this basically powerful economy offering businessmen opportunities, war or no war. Maybe in differing degrees. There have been shifts in the types of items required by that country but that has not diminished the size of its imports substantially.

Dr Kashani says the 20 million dollar turnover was achieved by a variety of deals and involved barter, contracts and trade, principally with the private sector.

The firm enjoys extensive contacts within Iran and is also a big importer of Iranian goods. It is the largest importer of top quality Iranian pistachios and last year its

imports amounted to 1,200 tonnes. Dr Kashani hopes to raise the quantity this year to 3,000 tonnes, which will be alone worth about 15 million dollars at current prices. Pistachio import has been made against supply of domestic appliances. Some 12,000 refrigerators and 10,000 ACs were despatched to Iran last year. The shipments were made either directly or through Dubai because in certain cases importing into Dubai was easier or cheaper. The other items of export are packaging materials, industrial raw materials, machinery, equipment, spareparts and yarn and fibres.

Dr Kashani believes in long-term business dealings and with this in mind had, through full-page advertisements, invited suppliers for various products last September. His strategy involves the role of an active partner in trade with that country. And given their intimate knowledge of that country, Dr Kashani is confident of realising that aim.

The Export Division will be concentrating on long-scale imports of Iranian fruits and vegetables into this country. Last year it imported 2,000 tonnes. But at present substantial losses are incurred through

repetitive loading and unloading operations of vegetables, which Dr Kashani seeks to eliminate through improved packing and transportation. Last year this firm had, for example, provided half a million fruit trays and 23 million tin cans. Now it plans to invest in a fleet of reefer containers for vegetables, to be washed, sorted and packed at a packing centre in Iran. The containers will then be driven into a landing craft at Bandar Abbas and unloaded in Dubai, thus fruits and vegetables arriving here with their freshness intact. The vegetables will be marketed under the company's own brandname.

For its re-export operations, the firm intends to use the facilities at Jebel Ali extensively, where it will have its own warehouse. By using the transshipment zone, the company will be saving the four per cent customs duty. And eventually it intends to stock large quantities of domestic appliances, machinery, equipment and spare parts for immediate delivery to Iran. It has already computerised its list of suppliers and set up offices in Canada, Europe and Far East for arranging supplies at a short notice.

CSO: 4400/197

DUBAYY MERCHANTS SEE NEW TRADE WITH IRAN

Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 25 Jan 84 p 1

[Text]

THERE are chances of windfall revival in trade for merchants in Dubai who had given up hope of any sustained re-exports to Iran.

Following representations from the UAE's Iranian community, the commerce ministry in Teheran has decided to allow the import of 70 different items, upto a total value at one million riyals (Dh 50,000).

The ministry had earlier cut down the list of permissible imports to six, all of it agricultural and reconstruction equipment, dealing a major blow to trade in Dubai.

The revised list, which is expected to be formally communicated to Iranian missions in the Gulf in a few weeks, includes motorcycles, automobile tyres, a wide range of spare parts, paints, electronic and electrical items, household goods, sewing machines and textiles.

Luxury items are not on the list which excludes silk clothing and video cassette recorders as well. All the six items earlier exempted continue to find a place in the revised list, but the emphasis is mainly on items required for reconstruction work in Iran.

Also covered are goods which are

not manufactured in Iran in sufficient quantities to meet domestic demand. In all, 20 items are understood to be heavy equipment, including machinery and pick-up.

Duty will be charged on these goods at concessional rates. To be eligible for facilities under this scheme, an Iranian should have stayed abroad for at least six months at a stretch or for eight months in a calendar year.

Import will be permitted once a year, but the period for calculating residence abroad will be backdated to 1979, the year of the Islamic revolution.

Iranian sources said there were many Iranians who had not travelled to Iran since the revolution and they will now be able to take in goods worth four million riyals (Dh 200,000). The scheme is applicable only to Iranians living in the Gulf.

Hojatoleslam Syed Raza Borghai, Ayatollah Khomeini's representative in the UAE who took up the case of non-resident Iranians with the Commerce Ministry, is understood to have told the authorities that the six items permitted earlier were too expensive for Iranian labourers here to purchase.

The new list of 70 specific items is

smaller than the previous one of 90 divided into 46 categories, but is still considered in business circles to be sufficient to generate a large turnover in the local market.

It is understood that the UAE-Iran shipping service which was to start on January 16 will now begin operating only after the new list is formally notified to Iranian missions in the Gulf. The service hopes to lure a large chunk of business provided by non-resident Iranians under this scheme. So far, the bulk of cargo sent by them was being carried on dhows from Dubai's creek.

The Iranian authorities have also decided to allow its government officials abroad to take back petrol-driven automobiles of upto four cylinders valued at not more than \$6,000. The scheme will apply to government officials serving the world over, but they can take an automobile only once in their lifetime.

Meanwhile, it has been announced that the baggage allowance of 50,000 riyals (Dh 2,500) for Iranians going home will be entirely duty-free. In addition, there will be no minimum period of stay abroad that is mandatory for them to take advantage of this facility.

CSO: 4400/199

FINANCE MINISTER TO BEGIN JOINT VENTURES WITH HUNGARY

Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 22 Feb 84 p 1

[Text] SHAIKH Hamdan bin Rashid, Minister of Finance and Industry, yesterday agreed to support Hungarian proposals for joint ventures.

Shaikh Hamdan who met a seven-member Hungarian delegation, led by Tamas Beck, president of its chamber of commerce, said that such industries should be based on UAE's natural resources, and their products should be competitive.

Briefing local businessmen on the outcome of the meeting, the President of the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Saeed Juma Al Naboodah, said the two sides discussed broad avenues of cooperation in the economic field.

Mr Naboodah said the Hungarian airline, Malev, which has been operating a weekly flight between Dubai and Budapest since last November, will double the frequency of its flights from March end, as part of the growing ties between the two countries. Mr Naboodah described the flights as "the bridge that will allow for further links in all other fields."

Mr Naboodah said the Dubai Chamber will host an exhibition of Hungarian products from March 24 to March 27. Another Hungarian agriculture mission is scheduled to visit the UAE before the exhibition.

Mr Beck told local businessmen that Hungary had made a lot of progress in agriculture and was now in a position to offer its expertise to set up joint ventures in this field.

Mr Beck also offered to cooperate in the field of electrical industry. Hungary was actively considering the idea of setting up a trade centre in Dubai, Mr Beck said. They were also considering to make use of Dubai's free trade zone facilities for trading with other Gulf states.

Mr Naboodah was happy to note that the mission had brought along detailed proposals for joint ventures, which would be circulated among the emirate's business community.

The Dubai Chamber president briefed the mission on facilities offered by the Emirates Industrial Bank, and the advantages offered by growing economic integration among AGCC member states.

The Hungarian team also visited Port Rashid and the Dubai Dry Dock facilities.

While in Abu Dhabi, earlier, the mission met the Minister of State for Financial and Industrial Affairs, Ahmed Al Tayer. They also met the officials of the Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

CSO: 4400/204

QATARI BUSINESSMAN EXPECTS RISE IN OIL CONSUMPTION DURING SECOND QUARTER

Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 22 Feb 84 p 1

[Text]

DOHA—A Qatari oil executive, Ali Al Jaidah, said he expected a slight improvement in the world's overall consumption of Opec oil in the second quarter of this year.

Mr Jaidah, managing director of the Qatar General Petroleum Corporation, said he believed that the "bad days for Opec are over."

"Sometimes the decline in the world's consumption of Opec oil reached eight to nine per cent over the past few years, but I think now the situation will slightly improve should Opec survive the current situation in the market at this season of the year," Mr Jaidah said.

He told a Press conference that Opec's oil production could pick up by 1-2 million barrels a day at the end of this year.

Mr Jaidah, a former secretary-general of Opec, said Qatar had on the

average produced 280,000 bpd during 1983. He said the low production figures during last year had "affected all our other activities." He named two units that had been particularly hit, the Qatar Petroleum Company and the Liquefied Natural Gas plant. Qatar had, however, continued its exploration and drilling activities last year. Some 146,000 feet onshore and 63,800 feet offshore had been drilled in all.

Mr Jaidah said work could not begin on the LNG project until a firm buyer was found. Earlier reports had expected work to begin by next year. Other sources at QGPC still feel that work on the first phase of the LNG project, meant for domestic consumption, could begin next year. Mr Jaidah did not refer to the domestic aspect of the project in his brief reply.

He said negotiations were, however, going on with the two multinationals, BP and CFP on setting up a

joint venture with QGPC to set up the LNG project. "Negotiations are going on and I think the joint venture will be set up within some months," he said.

Asked if another partner was likely to join the venture, Mr Jaidah said the doors were open. "QGPC will have 70 per cent of the share in the joint venture. We have so far allocated only 15 per cent to the two multinationals together. So there is room for other partners. We don't rule it out."

Mr Jaidah singled out Qatar's natural gas reserves as the most important source of income in the post-oil period.

Proven reserves of Qatar's huge natural gas field known as the dome amounted to 150 trillion cubic feet, he said, adding that the overall potential of the field could be much more than that.

Mr Jaidah said the new refinery set up by the QGPC would be commissioned today.

CSO: 4400/204

IRAN SAID TO OPEN COLLEGES TO OTHER MUSLIM COUNTRIES

Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 5 Feb 84 p 2

[Text]

IRAN has decided to throw open the doors of its colleges and universities to students of Third World, particularly Muslim countries.

According to information received in Dubai, male and female students of these countries, irrespective of their place of residence who have completed 12 years of school education may apply individually or through their institutions for a college or university place in Iran for a degree course in any discipline of their choice.

Students who have scored over 75 per cent in their 12th year examination are eligible to receive scholarships valued totally at 35,000 rials per month for single and 42,500 rials per month for married students. However those with marks between 60 and 75 per cent would not receive any monet-

ary incentive.

Degree courses offered in colleges attached to Iran's 1, universities cover a wide range of subjects including medicine, engineering, social and economic studies. Admission will also be given to post-graduate students on the same terms. According to advice received, applications for admission may be submitted to Iranian embassies and consulates abroad.

Selected students would have to undergo six months of instruction in Persian language before starting the course proper. The language study period could be extended by another six months if proficiency is not achieved.

Except for medicine which takes seven years; duration including two years' internship, all degree courses are of three and a half to four years' duration.

CSO: 4400/200

CASE POSES MAJOR TEST OF COMPATIBILITY BETWEEN ISLAM, PERSONAL STATUS LAW

Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic No 3100, 9 Mar 84 pp 20-25, 72

[Article by Raja' 'Abdallah and Amal Taha: "Case 520, Which has Suspended the Application of the Personal Status Law"]

[Text] In December 1982 the personal status courts in Egypt determined to suspend rulings on cases bearing on divorce applications that are founded on the new amendments introduced into the personal status law concerning wives suing for divorce if their husbands have concealed their marriage to another woman from them. This was based on grounds that second wives are to be considered harmful to the first wives and permit them to demand a divorce without having to prove this harm. The personal status courts have not taken this position with the goal of suspending the new articles of the personal status law; rather, they are waiting the ruling of the higher constitutional court regarding Case 520 for 1982, which the 16th district in the al-Zanani-ri court has handed over to the constitutional court for a ruling on the defense presented by the husband in this case, to the effect that the personal status law is unconstitutional since it violates the principles of Islamic law. Since that date, all similar cases have been piling up before the personal status court departments awaiting the review of this specific point. AL-MUSAWWAR held its investigation on this article, which was a direct cause of the suspension of the review of hundreds of cases concerning divorce, in the arena of personal status courts, which are inundated with hundreds of similar cases. It came up with a group of frank opinions expressed by heads of departments, the prosecutor's office, lawyers, members of the judiciary and men of religion.

The problem started when Mrs Mahasin 'Abbas Yusri filed a case against her husband, Mr Mustafa al-Dimirdash Muhammad, over his marriage to another woman. She demanded to be divorced from him, on grounds that the law permitted her the divorce, on grounds that the second marriage was harmful to her!

The husband rejected the wife's suit and made a defense on the unconstitutionality of the law, since it violated the principles of Islamic law.

The judge, Mr Fath Muhammad Hasanayn, chairman of the 16th district in the al-Zanani-ri court, responded to the husband's defense. On 12 December 1982,

Case 520 was handed over to the higher constitutional court and since that date the courts have decided to suspend the ruling on similar cases while awaiting the verdict of the higher constitutional court. Thus the application of the law has been suspended since that date. Let us take a few steps back, in order to determine the basis of the problem, how it arose and why.

In 1979, Law 44 for 1979 was issued containing some amendments to the personal status law in effect in Egypt, which had been issued in 1920, then 1929. These amendments occurred after long, deliberate study by a committee of senior men of religion and the law, Dr 'Abd-al-Mun'im al-Nimr, Shaykh Jadd al-Haqq 'Ali Jadd al-Haqq, Dr 'Abd-al-Rahman Bisar, Dr Muhammad Hasan Fayid, Shaykh Ahmad Haridi, Shaykh Faraj al-Sanhuri, the vice chairman of the Council of State, the dean of the Faculty of Law, and Dr Jamal al-'Utayfi, representing the Ministry of Justice.

This committee, with its great names in jurisprudence and Islamic law, approved these amendments, basing themselves on the provisions of Islamic law, and it was not suspected that anyone would contest its application.

The Contested Article

What, however, are the articles which are now being contested on grounds of unconstitutionality?

Article Six (bis) says:

"The marriage of a woman's husband to another woman without her consent will be considered harmful to that woman, even though she did not stipulate in her marriage contract that he should not marry another woman, as will the husband's concealment from the new wife that he has married someone beside her.

"The wife's right to demand a divorce will lapse when a year elapses from the date of her knowledge of the occurrence of the cause which has led to the harm, unless she has explicitly or implicitly consented to that."

The essence of this statement is that this article considers a second marriage harmful to the wife, and permits her to divorce without having to prove this harm, a principle which exists in the old law, which permits divorce because of harm.

The other article is the one which concerns the retention by a divorced woman nursing a child of the conjugal home. It says:

"A divorced woman who is nursing a child, following her divorce, will be able, with her child, to have sole possession of the rented conjugal home unless the man getting the divorce provides another suitable dwelling, and if the nursing period ends, or the divorced woman marries, the man getting the divorce may have sole possession, to the exclusion of his divorced wife, of the same dwelling, if he has the right to start retaining it by law."

These are the articles which are being opposed, although the courts have carried them out in the course of the 3 years from the issuance of the 1979 law to the end of 1982, when the objection arose!

The first opinion on the problem came from the al-Zananiri court, the biggest and most famous personal status court in Egypt and the one from which the case was transferred to the higher constitutional court. There was a department headed by the judge Mr Jadd al-Mitwalli 'Ali, who enhanced his good reputation as a response to the suspension and submission of the cases.

In front of the judge at this session were 56 personal status cases for Moslems and 35 cases for non-Moslems, then 18 cases for investigation; the total was 109 cases in a single session!

It is noteworthy that the overwhelming majority of these cases were cases of applications for divorce on grounds of incompatibility. The person harmed, usually the wife, had to prove the harm that had befallen her so that it would be possible to decree a divorce on her behalf. Nonetheless, not a single verdict was issued at that session. Verdicts of transmittal to the office of the prosecutor for investigation, delay for reannouncement or for summoning the witnesses to establish proof, to establish proof of the damage that had befallen the wife, or for a lack of documents, and so forth, were issued.

Some of these cases have been going on before the courts for more than 5 years. We had a meeting with Mr Jadd al-Mitwalli 'Ali, the chairman of the second department, with Messrs Muhammad 'Abd-al-Muttalib and Hilmi 'Abbas Yusuf, members of the department.

We asked him, "The judge has the right to accept the defenses the litigants are presenting or to reject them. However, you are always ruling in favor of the defense that the personal status law does not conform to Islamic law, and you have suspended the cases until the ruling of the higher constitutional court is issued. Why is that?"

[Answer] Because my personal conviction is that this law is flawed in more than one respect and is in violation of the principles of Islamic law in Article Six (bis) of Law 44 for 1979, because Islamic law, as embodied in the Koran, permits the husband to marry more than one woman and only restricts the husband's right to do so if harm occurs, leaving the judge the right to evaluate this harm. However, the stipulation of the law does not leave the judge this power of evaluation; rather, it makes it mandatory that he rule for the divorce if the first wife so requests."

The Sense of Harm

[Question] However, the harm in this case might be psychological and social. It is just the wife who can sense this harm; how can the judge sense it?

[Answer] Women are normally emotional and the situation could prompt her to ask for a divorce without thinking, since the law allows her to do that immediately. Perhaps if she thought a little bit she would respond to rea-

son, and accept her husband's marrying someone else. Therefore, the presence of the judge's right of evaluation gives one the opportunity of time in which to review oneself. We are not taking away the wife's right to get a divorce. Rather, we are asking that the judge have the power of evaluation to determine the extent of the harm that has befallen her in order to preserve the family ties.

[Question] There is another objection to the law, and that is the article which stipulates that a divorced woman who is nursing has the right to the marital residence. What is your opinion about that?

[Answer] Yes, this article is also one aspect of the flaws in the law. It stipulates that the wife has the right to obtain the marital home as soon as she is divorced, as long as she is nursing. The aspect of the flaw here is that the legislators have not left the judge the power of evaluation so that he can determine whether it is the wife or the husband who is entitled to the marital apartment, and indeed in the case of a nursing divorced woman for whom the husband has not provided another dwelling has made it mandatory that she have occupancy of the marital dwelling. This law has produced a disruption for the family. The stipulation which restricts the judge is unfair and unconstitutional. Each case has its circumstances. The wife, for example, might have another dwelling for herself and these circumstances might not be present for the husband. The judge is the one who must see the truth, in order to come up with a ruling which leads to justice.

Mr Ashraf Mustafa Kamal, the deputy chief of the office of the personal status prosecutor, also agrees with the view maintaining the objection to the law and the contestation of unconstitutionality, justifying that by its violation of the provisions of Islamic law. It is a condition of a divorce application submitted by the first wife that she prove the harm that has occurred to her.

The deputy chief of the office of the prosecutor asserts that the woman, in her capacity as mentally deficient, exploits the law which allows her to take sole occupancy of the marital apartment and determines to get a divorce to obtain the apartment and expel the husband from it.

He says that in its appearance, the legal stipulation which permits the divorced woman who is nursing to obtain housing seems to be based on concern over the interests of the child, but that is not true; rather, it is in the interests of the woman, because in the event the mother gets married and moves the nursing function over to the grandmother, the grandmother will not have the right to obtain housing. It would have been better for the law to stress that the person doing the nursing, whether that is the mother or someone else, was entitled to this dwelling, as long as the nursing function has been transferred to the dwelling.

He also adds that the stipulation which allows women to leave the house without the husband's permission in the case of need, or in a manner which common law allows or for a legitimate purpose, is flawed because the judge must be left the right to determine whether or not the woman's departure here is a violation of the right her husband holds over her, to keep her secluded or not, especially since women are mentally deficient.

The Opposite View

On the other side, we made a tour among lawyers in the same court in which hundreds and hundreds of cases are being reviewed each day, the al-Zananiri court.

Mr Salah al-Aswani, a specialist in women's cases and personal status, dots the i's by stating,

"The truth is that most of the people who attack this law do not mean to cast aspersions on it on its own merits; rather, they essentially have the goal of contesting the political system under whose aegis this law was issued. Through my experience with the numerous cases which I have gone through in this period, I consider that this law has achieved positive results which one cannot disparage. It is sufficient that the Egyptian husband is no longer a nervous man who can give the oath of divorce for the most trivial reason; indeed, thanks to this law, he now thinks at length before proceeding to dispossess his family, which means that this law has achieved stability of some sort for Egyptian families, and this in itself is an important matter.

"As far as the the nursing mother's sole occupancy of the marital home goes, I consider that this stipulation is not enough to protect the woman, in my view. Why not? Because keeping the wife in the marital apartment is contingent on her continuing right to nurse her children and that means that if she ceases to be able to perform this task, her right to the apartment will lapse. If she is sick, for example, and has an illness which makes her fail to perform her role as a nursing person, the husband will have the right to expel her from it and take over the apartment again, and that is not fair at all. In addition, the children might have gone beyond the nursing age; will one's conscience allow the dispossession of the wife after a married life which might have lasted for many years? There are many examples of this. There is a wife who was expelled by her husband after a marriage that lasted close to 40 years, for no reason except that her children had gone beyond the nursing age. There is another reason which in our opinion prompts the legislators to intervene in this particular point, and that is that the conjugal apartment is not always the property of the husband free and clear; women have gone out into the workplace and started through their income effectively to contribute to the family budget. Perhaps the sum of the key money the husband paid all belonged to the wife, or perhaps she contributed the main share of it, but the apartment was not [sic] registered in his name, not because the property is his but because that has been the procedure in common law, and therefore it is apparent to us that the provision of this article needs amending so that it can accommodate these cases. Finally, it is not correct that this law has increased the divorce rate. Rather, the opposite is correct."

Mrs Su'ad Hafiz Muhammad:

"It is not correct that this law is in violation of Islamic law, because the basis of marriage in Islam is love and mercy. Otherwise, there is adherence to what is commendable and permission to do what is right. The law, here,

gives a woman the right to apply for divorce if her husband has married someone besides her, and she feels that harm has befallen her. The harm could be psychological or social, and here the presence of good companionship and what is commendable is negated, so how can you force her into a life with a man she cannot live with companionably, or, if she has another opportunity to get married, deprive her of that, while that is what God has declared is to be prohibited? The law has not put a restriction on the husband; rather, it has permitted the wife to demand a divorce, if she wants to, while, if she does not feel harm, she has the right to live with the husband, sharing him with another wife in his life. Depriving the wife of her right to choose her life is in reality a violation of Islamic law."

A Hundred Cases in 2 Hours

I go back to the courtroom. The voice of the bailiff hurriedly calls the wives and husbands -- a hundred cases in less than 2 hours.

'Ayidah Ibrahim, a wife for 9 years, was left by her husband, with three children in her care. She filed suit for divorce 4 years ago and it has not been ruled on yet. She must prove the harm that occurred to her.

Najwa Mahmud, wanted for desertion of the conjugal home, does not have a home, and has a small child with her. She has been coming to the court for 2 years, and there is no reconciliation or divorce.

A mother of nine children, the youngest of whom is 10, was renounced by her husband 9 years ago and has not found a solution yet. She filed suit for divorce 3 years ago and still is coming to the court, and the case has been postponed from month to month.

A wife whose husband marries another person must join these ranks, because she has to prove the harm that has befallen her.

I returned to the judge, the gentleman.

I asked him, "Isn't it a frank violation of Islamic law to leave these wives and not rule on their cases? Doesn't God prohibit that with the frank statement in the verse 'Do not follow every inclination and leave her like someone in suspense,' since they have been in suspense here for years?"

He said, "That is true, but the persons who are responsible for that are the lawyers who stretch out their defenses and demands for the sake of cases!"

What Does Religion Say?

What, however, is the view of religion on this problem?

Dr 'Abd-al-Mun'im al-Nimr, the former minister of religious endowments, stated "The opposition to this law now is based on the compelling desire for political opposition, especially since we are now on the brink of the elections, and this has pushed people to oppose this position.

"The committee which was assigned to submit the draft of the law was composed of the shaykh of al-Azhar, the late Shaykh Bisar, the mufti at that time, Shaykh Jadd-al-Haqq, me (I was minister of religious endowments), the counsellor Ahmad Musa representing the minister of justice, and some counsellors. The committee was on that level, the highest religious level, and in no case, whatever the circumstances and pressure, was it possible that it would reach a determination which did not have strong backing from Islamic law, whether stipulated or the product of intellectual effort, since the public interest was the goal of all legislation.

"Second, in some of its articles, the committee considered that there was what it judged to be a violation of the provisions of Islamic law and disregard for the public interest, and we rejected that -- for example, the requirement that the divorce be signed before the judge in the presence of two witnesses. Although the draft the research academy approved and put in effect in 1976, and also the consolidated law between Egypt and the Sudan, in Article 109, which had been set out by a committee comprised of professors and scholars of Islamic and canon law, stipulated that it was necessary that there be two witnesses, nonetheless we in the 1979 law did not give agreement to the need that there be two witnesses.

"In addition, the draft presented to us stipulated that women are assumed to have the right to work and leave their home without permission from the husband, unless the marital contract stipulates otherwise. However, we rejected this article, on grounds that it restricts the legal status and the rule of Islamic law that the woman belongs first of all in the house and her going out to work should be by permission from the husband. The husband may also be permitted to prohibit her from working even after he has given her permission, if that is in the interest of the home and the family. No official opposed what we rejected, and this gives an impression that the committee was not mobilized to give a particular opinion but rather was governed by Islamic law and the provisions of the jurists, from which we would choose what we considered most suitable for the case and most proper from our standpoint, and the committee did not depart from this framework.

"I would like to state that what damaged this draft were the circumstances surrounding its issuance and the president's insistence that it be produced in the absence of the People's Assembly. The people in opposition exploited this circumstance and assumed that ill will lay behind its construction, attacking some articles and hastening to accuse the members of the committee. For example, Article Six (bis), which the people in opposition say is in violation of Islamic law, is the one which states that marriage to a second woman should be considered harmful to the woman before her and that she can request a divorce; that is a well known principle in Islamic jurisprudence, especially in the creed of Imam Malik. It permits divorce in the case of harm, which is something that has been stipulated in previous laws. This amendment and this principle are founded on verses from the holy Koran, namely, 'Do not bring harm on them; indeed you will commit aggression, and whoever does so is unfair to himself.'

'''Bring what is commendable on them, or part from them in a manner that is commendable.'"

"These two verses state that a man cannot live with a woman against her will and if it is proved that the marriage has brought harm upon her, she can demand a divorce and demand to receive a response on it. The noble sayings and doings of the prophet also state this principle. Therefore it is a matter in Islamic law that is to be taken for granted. Law 133, Chapter Five, under the title of the harm of polygamy, endorses it.

"A wife whose husband marries someone besides her may demand a divorce in 2 months of the date of that marriage if she has not stipulated that, if she is not content with the marriage. If she is content, she will abandon her right.

"In accordance with this law, the wife presents her case to the judge, who investigates and issues a verdict. It is well known that the wife's renunciation of the taking of a wife besides her is a psychological matter which is related to her own feelings, and not to the feelings of anyone besides her. If she says 'I feel harm,' it is not for someone besides her to say to her 'You do not,' and deny her feelings. In what we have decreed we have not added to what previous laws have stipulated, but we have decreed that the woman's psychological state and sense of being harmed be recognized, basing ourselves on the actual state of women in Egypt and the harm we all feel when another wife is taken besides her. In accordance with this, we have stated that it is to be considered harm, and the judge cannot make an investigation into whether the marriage was harmful or not. What there is no doubt about, and no one can deny, is what a thorough investigation of Egyptian life will indicate, which is that the wife is harmed and the home turns into hell even when she merely feels that her husband is looking at someone else. What would you say if she sees the husband as a fait accompli? We cannot decree that she is to stay with her husband against her will, because that violates what God ordered and because it causes extreme harm to the family.

"It is not permissible for anyone to use what happened in the past or what happens in some Arab countries as a protest against us. There there is no problem of marrying a second wife. Here, however, many problems are created and for this reason we have striven to deal with this problem by giving the woman the right to stay with her husband or leave him, because if she stays of her own consent that is the reality and if she does not consent that is her right, and it is in the interests of her children that they part.

"The wife has been given a period of a year in which to think, and in which to contemplate and decide what she considers is most appropriate for her."

Some Loopholes in the Law

Dr 'Abd-al-Mun'im al-Nimr added, "Some loopholes might appear in the laws, after they pass into actual experience, contrary to what the people who set out the laws might think. For example, I have from my point of view considered that some wives might not be able to meet their husband's needs, or that the wife might be sterile or ill. In that case, the husband is in urgent need to get married, and the law is not opposed to this situation. It is necessary that we pay attention to such circumstances.

"The second loophole which has appeared is in the article bearing on the dwelling. If it is possible for me to recommend anything, I would prefer that a committee discuss it, dealing with opinions among themselves in order to set out a remedy. People can be found who will exploit laws wrongfully, generally, even if they are Islamic law. Some people have abused the principle of polygamy and that has been a cause for the placing of restrictions on marriage. In addition, some men have abused the principle of divorce, and the situation has required that some restrictions on abuse be set. Many of the personal status laws are based on the choice of a given creed and have been based on what the persons setting out the law have considered is in the public interest in taking an opinion in dealing with this problem!"

What Support Does the Woman Have in Demanding a Divorce?

Shaykh Jadd-al-Haqq 'Ali Jadd-al-Haqq, the Shaykh of al-Azhar Mosque, said,

"It is well known that the sources of rulings in Islamic law are the [holy] book, the sayings and doings of the prophet, agreement and analogy. It is in the context of these sources that the individual intellectual efforts of the various creeds have been made.

"Divorce, and the provisions on divorce, were one of the subjects on which dispute arose. For example, the religious jurist al-Hanafi rejected divorce in cases in which the man was disturbing his wife, whether by words or blows or abandonment. However, the jurist al-Maliki permitted divorce in these cases, and that is what we have adopted since 1929.

"Society then started talking about polygamy and some people demanded that this polygamy be prohibited and that what God has permitted be forbidden.

"What has this law done?

"It has not forbidden polygamy; rather, it has considered a man's marriage to another woman to be harmful to the first wife, if she does not consent to this marriage. If she does consent to it, she relinquishes her right. The law allows her to demand a divorce within a year of the date on which she learns [of the marriage]. It has also made it mandatory that the husband present the justice of the peace a written declaration on his social status, that is, if he is married or not, and, if he is married, he must write down the name of the wife who is married to him and her place of residence. If a new marriage is contracted, the justice of the peace must notify those wives of this man's marriage to a new wife, so that he can establish their right to demand a divorce. That is a regulation for the use of the right, the right which is granted to the husband to determine his circumstances and marry within the limits of what God has permitted, but it also gives the wife the right which God has stipulated for her, and if she is harmed by her husband's marriage to another woman, she will have the right to get a divorce. The source of this right, the thing which indicates it, is the tradition of the prophet of God, on whom be God's prayers and peace, 'There is no harm and damage.' Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal took from that the wife's right to stipulate in her marriage contract that her husband not marry another woman. If that condition is disturbed, she has the right to demand a divorce.

"As regards the man's right to a divorce, the law does not oppose that and does not prohibit it. The right is absolute, because God has granted it freely and given it to men through the verses of the holy Koran. However, the law has regulated this right, and, if the husband gets a divorce or wants a divorce, he must document this divorce and register it with the documentary body, that is, the justice of the peace. The intention in compelling the husband to do this is that the wife know of the divorce through official means."

Adhering to the Commendable or Permitting Good Deeds

Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Mushidd, chairman of the committee on judiciary rulings in al-Azhar, said:

"I, as an official in al-Azhar, cannot consider it proper that I should comment on the opinion of a committee consisting of the highest level of men of learning and religion, the shaykh of al-Azhar, the mufti of the republic and the minister of religious endowments. They are all, in addition to their positions, members of the greatest academy of learning, which is the Academy of Islamic Research.

"With respect to the attack on this law, that is because it was issued and was not stipulated in the books of Islamic jurisprudence. That provoked condemnation among men, especially over the wife's freedom to continue with the marriage or to abrogate it without the will of the husband if she has been harmed by her husband's resultant marriage to another woman.

"We consider that the contents of Article Six (bis) are fair to the wife, and that the Islamic jurists did not produce results that entailed harm and that they did not cite a frank absolute stipulation which would deprive the wife of her right to demand a divorce. Therefore, men rebel against the contents of this article and wives adhere to it. The second reason for the rebellion against this law is that it made its appearance before the public without assuming its ordinary legal course, which is that it should be submitted to the legislative committee in al-Azhar, then the Council of Ministers, then the People's Assembly. Rather, the opposite happened: it was presented by the Council of Ministers to the committee whose composition I mentioned, then to the People's Assembly. That is, the legal progression of the law was wrong.

"From the standpoint of Islamic law, this law has been taken from the creed of Imam Malik and similarly from the creed of Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal, may God be content with them. Abu Hanifah and al-Shafi'i differed with those two imams.

"The basic point in permitting divorce on grounds of harm is the almighty's statement 'And if you are afraid of a rift between them, send a verdict from his family and a verdict from her family. If they want a correction, God will reconcile them.'

"That is compatible with the transmitted traditions of the prophet, on whom be God's prayers and peace, where he said, 'There should be no damage and no harm.'

"It is also compatible with the holy Koran, as evidenced by his statement, 'Adherence to what is commended or the grant of permission to good deeds.'

"If adherence to what is commended is lost, then it is obligatory to grant permission to good deeds.

"Since the problem of having more than one wife is a social one, the draft considered it proper to consider that polygamy constitutes a sort of disturbance for the former wife and also the wife from whom the husband hid the fact that he had been married.

"The choice the legislators made is distinguished by being within the context of Islamic law and not violating its principles, while at the same time it does not perpetuate the problem of polygamy except by the consent of the wives themselves.

"However, in no respect did the legislators leave it up to the wife to use her right as she wishes, at a time when she wishes. Rather, they set it at a year of the date on which she learned that the cause leading to the harm had occurred, unless she consented to remain in the state of marriage to him."

The Woman Has the Right To Stipulate Points Which Will Allow Her To Retain Her Rights in the Marriage Contract

In a thesis on the Sunnite platform in Islam presented by Dr Muhammad al-Ahmadi Abu al-Nur, instructor of prophetic traditions in the Faculty of Principles of Religion, by which he obtained the degree of erudition, the doctorate, with the first rank of honor, Islam does not legitimize polygamy, but rather approves it as a phenomenon that was rampant in society before it. However, it has set out restrictions and limits on it which guarantee that it is regulated and that the family is not harmed.

However, if there is no acceptable justification for the polygamy, or if it results in economic or social harm to the family, in this event it must be prohibited.

Dr Muhammad al-Ahmadi Abu-al-Nur, in his thesis, pointed out that women had the right to make stipulations in the marriage contract which they considered would allow them to retain their rights, and that they could stipulate that their husband not marry another woman and that if the stipulation was violated she could demand a divorce.

Islam makes it mandatory that the man fulfil the conditions attached to the marriage contract.

Therefore we wonder why a general appeal is not launched among women, which aware men will support, to make women conscious of their rights. If secular law stands as a barrier to the vicious attacks that inhibit it from regulating what the tolerant Islamic law has made lawful, permitting women to have the right to get a divorce, which is what is given the word "chastity," to stipulate that their husbands not marry other women besides themselves, and other conditions, which have been agreed on, so that they will not meet with

opposition from people who are devoted to raising opposition, why isn't a special section attached to the marriage contract containing conditions between the two spouses on which each person who is about to get married will reach agreement, so that women will be granted adequate protection and the two parties will agree to cope with any changes which might occur in their lives in the future?

Therefore, also, women alone will be able to protect their rights if the law continues to be unable to do so!

The Personal Status Law from Muhammad 'Abduh to Now

None of the laws that have been issued in Egypt throughout its judiciary and legal history has met with the problems, obstacles and constant unremitting war that the personal status law has, by being used as a political weapon, especially when public elections draw close.

What is amazing is that this law could have made a beginning in the last century that would be more progressive than it is now; we feel as if we are moving backward as we review some of the developments of this oppressed law!

In 1897 the imam Shaykh Muhammad 'Abduh presented a report to the Ministry of Justice demanding that a law be issued prohibiting polygamy, following a thorough study of Islamic law.

In his study Shaykh Muhammad 'Abduh, explaining the reason by which the Koran permitted polygamy, stated that that was the tribal conditions that prevailed among the Arabs at that time. Before the prophetic mission, they were in a state of permanent schism and struggle, and the number of men declined through killing. Many women remained unmarried, on the one hand, and, on the other, polygamy had beneficial points at the time of the emergence of Islam, most important of which was the bond of blood relationship and relationship through marriage which is founded on group affiliation.

To the positive benefits of polygamy, the imam added that from the negative standpoint it did not entail the sort of harm it does now, because religion was firmly established in the spirits of women and men, and the disturbance the second wife gave did not go beyond her [original husband's] second wife. Today, however, the harm is transferred from each second wife to her son, to her father and to his other relatives, and corruption seeps through the whole family, then becomes widespread in the nation.

As proof that the permission to engage in polygamy was not absolute, the imam cited the almighty's statement "if you are afraid that you will not be fair, then have one wife, or that she would not possess your faith, it would be better that you not give sustenance," that is, be generous.

One can see that he stated a phrase on the subject of polygamy which shows a state of justice. The almighty's statement appeared in another verse: "You will not be able to be fair to women, no matter how careful you are, so do not be totally inclined to leave them hanging, and if you are proper and pious, God is all-forgiving and all-merciful."

If fairness is not possible, and there is fear that fairness will not be present, one must restrict oneself to one woman. The greatest embarrassment is in adding others to her.

Therefore the mere thought of being unable to be fair, which prevents marriage to more than one woman, has prohibited polygamy.

He undertook to ask the question whether we can nullify this Koranic grant of permission by stating, "Making nullification permissible is the custom, there is no doubt about it.

"First of all, since the condition for polygamy is that it bring about justice, that condition is certainly lacking. While it may exist in one in a million, it is not proper that it should be adopted as a rule. When corruption prevails in people's spirits and it becomes likely that men will not be fair with their wives, the ruler can absolutely prohibit polygamy, out of concern for what is most common.

"Second, men's mistreatment of their wives, and their deprivation of their rights to expenses and comfort, has prevailed with polygamy; therefore, the ruler and the person in charge of Islamic law can prohibit polygamy, in defense against the prevailing corruption and to protect homes from corruption."

However, he exempted the second marriage of a man in a case where the first wife is barren, because the purpose of marriage is reproduction.

Shaykh Muhammad 'Abduh said "There is no way to bring up a nation when polygamy is rampant in it, and religious scholars must review this matter, especially the Hanafite scholars, who have control of the matter and on whose creed the government is based. They do not deny that religion was revealed for the interest and good of people, and that one of its principles is the prevention of harm and damage. If a corrupt practice leads to something in an era which it did not cause before, there is no doubt that it is necessary to change the provision under current conditions, that is, on the rule 'warding off corrupt practices is a prelude to realizing people's interests.'"

However, no one adopted these views.

The first personal status law was issued in 1920.

In 1928, the Ministry of Justice prepared a draft which stipulated, in its first article, that "a married man may not contract a marriage with another woman, nor may anyone take over the contract of this marriage or record it, except by permission of the Islamic law judge in whose area of jurisdiction the location of the marriage lay."

The second article does not permit the judge to marry a married person before an investigation and evidence of the ability to live properly and spend on more than those who are under his protection and those of his immediate and secondary relatives whose expenses are an obligation on him.

However, these provisions came up against opposition, and Law 25 for 1929 was issued without them.

Following the 23 July revolution, the discussions continued and the demand for a modern integrated personal status law arose. The government responded to enlightened public opinion and formed a committee in 1960 to set out the law. The committee continued to procrastinate until the 1967 setback occurred, when people became preoccupied with other concerns.

In 1967 the execution of the provisions on marital obedience through the police was abrogated by an administrative bulletin issued by the Ministry of Justice.

In the early seventies, the demands were taken up again, until people's efforts took concrete form in a draft of a law which the Ministry of Social Affairs prepared, which contained some new sections, such as the requirement that the divorce be in front of a judge.

[Also,] second marriage [only] by permission issued by the court, which the court would permit only after confirming that there was a justification in Islamic law and an ability to coexist well and meet expenditures.

The divorced wife would have the right to compensation which the judge would assess in a manner where it would not exceed the expenses for 1 year for every 5 years.

It is also not permitted to carry out the provision on marital obedience under compulsion through the police.

However, this draft met with fierce resistance, which reached the point of the organization of demonstrations that engulfed the People's Assembly; the government retreated and did not present the draft as it had declared it.

However, in 1975 a committee was formed to begin reviewing a new draft.

In 1979 Law 44 for 1979 was issued, containing some minor amendments to the old law. These are the articles which the courts once again objected to, after they had been in effect for 3 whole years.

In 1982 they were handed over to the higher constitutional court.

Up to 1984, the verdict has not yet been issued.

How Is Divorce Carried out in Arab Countries?

Women have been able to achieve numerous gains in personal status laws whose provisions are derived from Islamic law, and Egyptian laws have been in the forefront among them.

In Tunisia, for example, divorce can take place only in court, and if the divorce is by the husband's desire a judgment of suitable compensation will be ruled against him, while if it is by the wife's desire, compensation will be ruled against her.

A divorce ruling will be made only if the judge fails to reconcile the two spouses. The Tunisian law also prohibits polygamy, in Article 18. Anyone violating the law is punished by imprisonment for a period of a year and a fine of 240,000 francs.

In Syria, the law prohibits polygamy except by permission of the judge, who must investigate the husband's ability to make expenditures. He can prevent the marriage if the opposite is proved to him. He also has the right to prevent the marriage in the event of a blatant difference in age between the two spouses.

The Syrian law permits the judge to rule for compensation in the event of the arbitrary use of the right of divorce.

In Iraq, the Iraqi law prohibits marriage to more than one woman except by permission of the judge who permits polygamy in the case legitimate interests exist; if it is feared that fairness will not prevail among wives, the judge will not permit this marriage.

Anyone violating this law will be punished by imprisonment for a period of a year or a fine of 100 dinars, or both.

Divorce is prohibited except by permission of the court.

Anyone wanting a divorce must file suit in the Islamic law court, demanding that it be struck down and ruled on, and if it is not possible for him to have a review in court, he must record the divorce in the court in the period before one can remarry, and the argument in favor of the marriage will be valid until it is nullified by the court.

Women's Rights in Egypt

Since Egypt signed the agreement to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination against women, which the United Nations passed at the world women's conference held in Copenhagen in 1980, a number of important developments have occurred in programs bearing on women in Egypt and some organizations were established to care for women's rights, most important of which were:

The establishment of a general department of women's affairs in the Ministry of Social Affairs in 1977, in its capacity as a government agency in the nationwide context, drawing up general policy for the development of the Egyptian woman, setting out government plans and programs for the care of women and their assimilation into development, executing women's development programs in the local, regional and nationwide contexts, and cooperating with international organizations and bodies that are concerned with women's affairs.

The national women's committee was established in Egypt, functioning as a higher committee for planning and coordination containing representatives of all ministries, authorities and private women's societies which are concerned with the development of women. The Ministry of Social Affairs heads up this committee.

This committee draws up higher policy for the development of women and puts into execution the recommendations issued by international organizations concerned with women's affairs in a manner that is in keeping with the circumstances of Egyptian society.

The national women's committee has carried out an experimental project for the development of rural women in Upper Egypt in the Governorates of Asyut, Sawhaj, Qina and Aswan, in cooperation with the UNICEF organization, to help women increase their income and raise their social and economic levels.

The national women's committee has also carried out a plan to serve working women in the Governorates of Cairo and Giza to help them overcome the problems they face and help them play their many parts as mothers, housewives, and workers and participate alongside men in the development of Egyptian society.

The committee has also carried out field research on the conditions and requirements of the Egyptian woman. This is considered a basic scientific foundation for the drawing and planning of women's development policy.

The family guidance and counselling offices which the Ministry of Social Affairs established, which are 71 in number, distributed among the various villages and towns of Egypt, resolve family problems that are presented to them. The average cases whose problems are solved, which have been handed over from the Islamic law courts to these offices, which have succeeded in resolving them, come to 18,500 families per year.

The Ministry of Social Affairs has carried out the project on productive families with the aim of increasing family incomes by training women, or members of the family, in certain productive skills, and offering them raw materials, financial support and the marketing of products.

About 3 million pounds have been allocated for this project since the signing of the agreement to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women. In the period from 1980 to 1983 about 240,000 girls and ladies have benefited from this project.

In addition, 246 women's clubs which train women in various productive skills and the occupation of their free time have been established throughout the republic.

The increase in the number of nurseries for looking after children, whose number comes to 2,341. In addition, 25 institutions have been established to shelter children from 6 to 18 who are deprived of family care.

The number of such homes for females comes to 176. In addition, 174 social clubs have been established to occupy the free time of children from six to 12.

In the area of social insurance and social aid for working women and families, the government has offered financial aid totalling 2.17 million pounds, from which about a million families have benefitted.

A general society for women's care was established in 1982 which offers social care for women throughout the republic.

In the area of education, we can find perceptible advancement in the education of women in Egypt. The first secondary girl's school was established in 1924 in Egypt, and since that date the government's attention to girls' education up to the university has continued and the number of schools for boys and girls at the primary level totalled 13,500 as of 1983. The number of female students enrolled in Egyptian universities came to 335,000 in 1983.

In the field of the provision of government and private services which have been presented to Egyptian women in accordance with Article 123 of the agreement to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women, the national women's committee has issued a group of guides to guide women and a guide for executive services for women to show the steps that must be taken to obtain service, and the documents which must be presented.

11887

CSO: 4504/211

ACCOMPLISHMENTS, POLICIES OF EXPORT OFFICE REVIEWED

Casablanca LE MESSAGE in French 7 Mar 84 pp 27-30

[Interview with Abdallah Lahlou, director general of the Marketing and Export Office (OCE); date and place not given]

[Text] [Question] The role of the OCE in foreign trade is a fairly substantial one. Would you summarize the essential points?

[Answer] The OCE occupies an important place in the country's foreign trade.

Actually, over a quarter of all Moroccan exports are made up of products for which the OCE is responsible (about 27 percent of the total value of exports in 1982).

The Office's exports are in third place as a source of foreign exchange after phosphates and contributions of immigrant workers.

In addition to representing Morocco at international fairs and expositions, the OCE ensures supervision and normalization of Moroccan production as well as its placing and marketing on foreign markets.

Consequently, it is involved in all phases of the export process: production, packing, storage, transport (through national shipping companies), customs, and so on.

[Question] What measures are being taken to develop the export sectors for which the OCE is responsible?

[Answer] Within the framework of the promotion of Moroccan exports, the Office's essential mission, the latter constantly tries to develop the sectors for which it is responsible.

With respect to citrus fruits, its action included: the expansion and/or replanting of trees; improving productivity; adaptation of the range of varieties to market requirements; reorganization of packing units; improving packing; optimum use of cold-storage facilities. The objective is to increase the volume of exports by 1985-1990 to 850,000 tons.

With regard to early produce and given the slump experienced by exports in this sector over the past decade (107,000 tons in 1982-1983, compared with 270,000 tons in 1972-1973), the Office has undertaken far-ranging action in order to rectify the situation. It is essentially a matter of: development of greenhouse crops in order to ensure better adaptation of the production calendar to the commercial schedule; improving productivity through the introduction of new growing and irrigation methods, both in the fields and the greenhouses, and through the widespread use of certain more profitable varieties (hybrid tomatoes); increasing our competitiveness through improved yields, packing and storage.

Concerning processed products, the Office's actions are of another nature. With respect to canned fish, the OCE constantly works for: modernization of the fishing fleet; the establishment of cold-storage facilities; the use of special packing for certain markets, and so on.

Regarding canned fruits and vegetables, the policy followed consists of encouraging: expansion of industrial crops; the conclusion of growing contracts between farmers and industrial units; modernization of processing units; an increase in the proportion of small-size packing, and so on.

With respect to wine, the OCE is encouraging different types of action. One might mention, among others, the following: restoration of vineyards; development of the production and exportation of personalized wines and wines of guaranteed vintage (AOG), and so on.

One should emphasize that these actions are followed in close cooperation with public authorities and the various professions involved.

[Question] Concerning the diversification of markets, could you tell us the accomplishments of the OCE so far?

[Answer] The main results achieved with respect to the diversification of markets are:

With respect to citrus fruits, our exports, 72.3 percent of which went to the EEC on the average during the 1965-1970 period, are still concentrated there, with 57 percent sold there from 1980 to 1983, but the difference mainly goes to East Europe, specifically the USSR (23.2 percent), the Middle East, Africa and North America (some 20 percent).

Regarding early produce, 95 percent of our exports still go to the EEC, which remains the top world import market for out-of-season produce. However, there has been diversification within the EEC. The share of our shipments to France has dropped, while the FRG has increased imports.

Exports of canned fish, with an average of 56 percent going to the EEC from 1970 to 1975, have dropped to about 46 percent for 1980-1983. This diversification has resulted in more exports going to Africa, the Middle East and East Europe.

Most canned vegetables go to EEC countries (95 percent on the average from 1971 to 1975, compared with 72 percent in 1980-1983) because of the special ties between European distributors and Moroccan producers. However, some progress is being made in the Middle East and North America.

Regarding canned vegetables, Morocco enjoys relatively favorable conditions for EEC markets, but it has suffered the full effect of EEC protectionism concerning wine. Our wine exports, 72 percent of which went to the EEC between 1965 and 1970, have dropped to 25 percent between 1980 and 1983. At the same time, the overall volume of wine exports dropped (1,227,000 hectoliters in 1969-1970 compared with 136,000 in 1982-1983).

[Question] After so many years of exporting and so many efforts made by the Office, what is the reaction of client countries or rather, of purchasers, vis-a-vis the Moroccan product compared with that of competing countries?

[Answer] One can say that the reaction of client countries vis-a-vis the Moroccan product compared with that of the competition is expressed in particular appreciation of the intrinsic quality of our products, which are grown under natural conditions and therefore enjoy certain advantages.

Actually and as you know, the foreign markets are becoming increasingly demanding with regard to quality and all our efforts have been directed toward a steady improvement in the image of Moroccan products.

This efforts has concerned the intrinsic quality of the product as well as its presentation, packing and logistics used to ensure it is shipped under the best possible conditions in order to preserve that quality.

One should point out in this connection that the theme chosen for our current advertising campaign is called "quality signed Morocco."

[Question] Regarding quantities exported as well as the quality of the product, what are the aims and prospects of the Office's future?

[Answer] The medium-range objectives and future prospects of the Office include the following exports: 730,000 tons of citrus fruits; 210,000 tons of early produce, including 150,000 tons of tomatoes, 50,000 tons of potatoes and 10,000 tons of vegetables; 350,000 hectoliters of wine.

One should recall that our accomplishments in 1982-1983 included: 601,000 tons of citrus fruits and 106,900 tons of early produce, including 64,400 tons of tomatoes, 39,300 tons of potatoes and 3,200 tons of vegetables; and 136,300 hectoliters of wine.

These objectives are based on the immediate implementation of different plans of action worked out for the purpose.

Let us mention the following: regeneration of citrus fruit orchards, improved growing techniques in the field and hothouses for early produce (tomatoes, potatoes and vegetables), the regeneration and replanting of vineyards, and so on.

Along with this action to be undertaken domestically, we must also make the most of the potential of foreign markets through: adaptation of the Moroccan supply to the requirements of those markets, regarding quality as well as the most suitable marketing schedule; diversification of markets; and the application of a trade policy based on the evolution of distribution structures and sales methods on consumer markets.

[Question] There has never been as much talk of the importance of foreign trade as there has in recent months. With respect to the strategy of promoting exports, the OCE has a prime role. How do you intend to fulfill that role?

[Answer] Morocco does encourage the development of exports and this option is of particular importance with regard to food and agriculture, given the agricultural vocation of the country.

In addition, Morocco has a food and agricultural shortage that could be compensated for by an increase in exports, thus being able to help improve our trade balance.

Adoption by the OCE and the professions concerned of the different sectorial plans has required us to take suitable government measures, some of which have begun to go into effect. Results registered in the market garden sector and particularly in the field of hothouse crops are encouraging (778 hectares in 1982-1983).

It would be desirable to activate the implementation of various other recommendations.

Concerning logistics involved in exports, adaptations and innovations in packing and shipping methods are constantly carried out. However, replacement of part of the national fleet in medium-range terms is a basic necessity.

Concerning the marketing of our products, the main guidelines followed by the Office have already been discussed.

[Question] Let us back to the Office itself. Could you tell us about the organization's structure?

[Answer] Before speaking about the internal organization of the Office, it is useful to recall that the lawmakers have given our institution organs of management that will ensure harmonious operation and operational connections with government agencies as well as professional partners.

The Marketing and Export Office instituted by royal order on 9 July 1965 is currently governed by the *dahir* of 17 December 1976, which took up and modified the original order. The organs instituted by the existing *dahir* are: a board of directors presided over by the prime minister and made up of ministries involved in the activity in question and representatives of all sectors for which the Office is responsible. The board has all powers needed for proper administration of the Office.

Next is the management committee headed by the minister of commerce and made up of the ministers directly involved. This committee follows up on the execution of decisions made by the board of directors.

We then have standing specialized technical committees made up of representatives of the Office and its private partners. These committees study, draft and ensure the execution of measures needed for the implementation of commercial policy and the proper functioning of exports.

The general director is assisted by a general secretary. The general director manages the Office, in keeping with the policies and decisions of its organs.

The internal structures of the Office are worked out and determined so as to correspond to the nature and activity of the different sectors.

The internal workings of the Office are based on three "product" directorates, four service directorates and three organization and control directorates.

The product directorates are: citrus fruits, early produce and processed products.

The service directorates include: commercial, logistics, development and international fairs and expositions.

The organizational and control directorates include: financial, personnel and social affairs, the directorate in charge of control and coordination of the subsidiaries and participation of the OCE group.

Every directorate is subdivided into departments, divisions and services, so as to rationally distribute work in terms of the tasks assigned.

Periodically, the management committee -- grouping all general directors and secretaries -- meets under the general director to debate important questions of the Office.

[Question] The Office's activities have become wide-ranging, which has led it to buy into certain joint ventures. Can one have an idea of what is happening in this area, while pointing out the main companies?

[Answer] In 1976, the OCE was empowered by the royal dahir and law of 17 December 1976 to "take action in the commercial, industrial and financial fields and to create or participate in any group or company whose purpose is the production, packing, transport or distribution of products for which it is responsible."

The OCE has established or participated in the creation of various companies such as: OGDEN [expansion unknown] and PANALFA [expansion unknown] for packing materials; SOFRUMA [expansion unknown] and COMITRAM [expansion unknown] for maritime and road transport; SOCAMAR [expansion unknown] and SERECA [expansion unknown] for cold storage; FRUMAT [expansion unknown] for the production of juice; SOCOBER [expansion unknown], SLIMACO [expansion unknown] and SOPLEM [expansion unknown] for packing, and so on.

The purpose of the OCE's participation basically consists of assuring Moroccan production in different fields of service at suitable cost and quality.

[Question] Finally, following the example of other offices, do OCE personnel enjoy certain benefits? Would you outline the evolution followed in this sector since establishment of the Office?

[Answer] To answer your question, I prefer to approach it differently and therefore give my response in a more general and more wide-ranging way. Actually, enterprises are now becoming increasingly aware that human resources constitute their prime commodity. In the OCE, we have set up a veritable policy for developing those resources and the advantages of which you speak are a dynamic element of our human development plan.

This plan includes improved and increased benefits and the implementation of professional training and refresher courses. Benefits, initially limited to on-the-job medicine, affiliation with the CNSS [expansion unknown] and modest medical coverage have been developed qualitatively and quantitatively. One should note: the establishment of a system of pensions and retirement for all personnel, new insurance protecting personnel and improved medical coverage; the opening of sales centers for common consumer products where prices are under market prices, which constitutes substantial support for the purchasing power of low-income families; the sending of Office personnel to our institution's vacation centers with symbolic participation in expenses; the drafting and implementation of a policy of aid in the purchase of housing. This major effort on the part of the Office has had remarkable results because in the space of a few years, a large part of housing needs have been met. From 1978 to 1983, almost half of all needs were covered. Finally, a training policy was drafted and implemented in order to improve the professional skills of our personnel, encourage advancement within the institution and contribute to their social and human fulfillment.

This is a brief view of the social aspects of the Office's human resource policy.

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CSO: 4519/130

FARMERS' WATER ALLOCATIONS CUT

Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 1 Mar 84 pp 1, 2

[Article by Yitzhak Oked]

[Text]

Water allocations for the country's farmers will be cut by between 10 and 25 per cent starting this morning, sources at the Water Commission said yesterday. For the time being, the general public will not be affected, though citizens are being asked to show extra restraint in water use.

The restrictions are being applied partly because of the season's below average rainfall and partly because of a failure at the Sapir pumping station on the Kinneret shore due to a fire there last week.

The fire damaged one of the station's three pumps, and smoke and soot in the underground facility have made it difficult to get the other units working. It will take another week or two, with help from Swiss and German engineers, before a full check of these units can be made. Normally, the station pumps over a million cubic metres of water daily.

The exact cut in the farmers' water allocation will only be determined when the state of the pumps at Sapir is known.

But even if the two pumps do become operational again soon, the Mekorot water company will still find itself supplying 15 to 20 per cent less water than usual from the Kinneret. "This means less water for them in July and August," warned Ze'ev Ashkenazi, Mekorot head. He urged farmers to take this into account now in planning summer crops.

Zvi Grinwald, director of water allocations at the Water Commission, explained that starting today,

any excess of water that farmers use this month will be deducted from next year's quota, which starts on April 1.

The drought committee of the Agriculture Ministry toured the Negev this week and agreed that the region has been the hardest hit in the country by this year's poor rainfall, with 350,000 dunams of crops severely affected.

While any drought compensation is normally paid on the basis of crops in the fields on May 15, the region's farmers were yesterday told they may turn over their fields prior to that date to offset further losses from weeds when preparing next year's sowing.

Farmers interviewed yesterday on the restrictions still seemed hopeful that they would not be too adversely affected. While this season's rainfall has been very low, an official declaration of drought may be made only several weeks hence, after a government committee has checked the damage and determined which areas have been hardest hit. And the farmers still hope that March rainfall will improve the situation.

But one Negev farmer insisted that even a 10 per cent water cut would be serious in his area.

Ezra Meir, head of the Fruit Production and Marketing Board, was confident that fruit trees would not be watered less, but forecast that cotton and vegetable growing would be harder hit.

Cotton Production and Marketing Board head Yisrael Gal said that a record 630,000 dunams have been scheduled for cotton planting this year. But water restrictions could cut this back. Nevertheless, he hoped that last year's 570,000 dunams would still be planted.

LAMIFNE HEAD BURG SEEKS TO FORM NEW NRP

Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 5 Mar 84 p 3

[Article by Sarah Honig]

[Text]

TEL AVIV. — The strife-torn National Religious Party was shaken again yesterday, when it became known that the Lamifne faction, headed by Interior Minister Yosef Burg, is seeking to set up a new NRP with the help of Tehiya MK Hanan Porat and Matzad MK Haim Druckman.

All sides stressed that such contacts are merely preliminary, and Porat has vowed to return his mandate to Tehiya and resign from the Knesset should he decide to switch political allegiances.

Lamifne's rival faction, headed by Education Minister Zevulun Hammer, had not been informed of the plan for the "new party." The entire episode, say NRP insiders, might serve to speed up processes already working to split the party.

Sources in all NRP factions admit that the courtship of Porat, Druckman and other former NRP members, including the breakaway Tami Party, are all maneuvers in the internal battle between the two large factions for control of the party. If Lamifne succeeds in returning defectors to the party, this might force Hammer and his followers to break away from the NRP and set up their own version of a "new NRP."

Porat said he is not considering returning to the NRP, but might join an effort to rebuild the national-religious movement, with a change of emphasis and an entirely new leadership. This, he said, would

attract many more of the religious voters in the party to a nationalist banner, which would sponsor a policy similar to that of Tehiya.

"I am tormented by the crisis in the national-religious movement and am definitely not in any way dissatisfied with Tehiya," Porat said.

"Its foundations and the partnership it initiated between religious and secular members is as sound as ever. If I will indeed decide eventually that I can help rehabilitate the religious movement and that we can set up a new NRP, I will draw the necessary conclusions and return my mandate to Tehiya," said Porat.

But things may not be so simple for him. He is the representative of the Gush Emunim component in Tehiya, and even if he should return his mandate to the party, the next in line on the Tehiya slate of Knesset candidates is Zvi Shiloah of the secular segment of the party. This would leave the Gush without any representation in the Tehiya Knesset faction.

The Gush is now expected to exert considerable pressure on Porat not to continue with his contacts with the NRP. So far, he appears to be the only one of the Gush leaders to be entertaining notions of leaving Tehiya. His move was condemned by Tehiya political secretary Gershon Shafat and by its mentor, Rabbi Azriel Waldman.

The latter branded Porat's contacts with Lamifne "irresponsible

and the result of weakness. We would prefer if he remains with us, but even if he does not, we will not follow him and will not leave Tehiya. We are for cooperation between those who are observant and those who call themselves secular. We do not believe in shutting ourselves up in a narrow religious sect," said Waldman.

The Gush is expected to hold meetings and rallies to pressure Porat back into line. Tehiya leader Science Minister Yuval Ne'eman said the Porat move is not likely to hurt Tehiya's electoral prospects, "since we did not get so many religious votes. Many of those went directly to the Likud and not to Tehiya. We did get votes in the new settlements, but these are not voters who are swayed by leaders, but who make up their own mind."

Tehiya MK Geula Cohen said Porat only informed Tehiya of his contacts with Lamifne at the end of last week.

In Lamifne there was general embarrassment over the leak of overtures to Porat and the equally-hawkish Druckman. Burg called it an "attempt to foil the move."

Faction strongman Rafael Ben-Natan said the move is only at a "very preliminary stage. There is a chance for a deal, but we are still far from it."

He denied that any details have been worked out for setting up a new party with an entirely new leadership. This would apparently not include Burg, who is reportedly ready to retire.

But such a plan would also mean that his rival, Hammer, would be barred from the leadership. Hammer, who had not even been consulted, is not likely to agree.

All Ben-Natan would say is that there is a need for "some rotation in Knesset representation, and those who had been in office for long should perhaps be required to get more votes in the party convention if they are to represent us in the Knesset again."

He also rejects the notion that a party which can attract Druckman and Porat away from their new hawkish parties must be quite hawkish itself. The new NRP, as he envisions it, would continue to represent different views and concentrate on spiritual and social issues.

Such a formula is hardly likely to woo Porat and Druckman away from their present political homes, it is thought in the NRP, whose members doubt that Lamifne is really offering a thorough change in the party.

Moreover, unless there really is a new party, with a new slate of Knesset candidates, it is hardly likely that Porat and Druckman would team up with such doves as MK Avraham Melamed, Ben-Natan and former MK David Glass, who is also reported to be seeking alliance with Lamifne.

Tami, whose leaders hail mostly from the NRP, announced officially yesterday that it would not consider a deal with Burg's Lamifne. Tami is considered more likely to team up with the Hammer faction.

Porat, it is felt in both the NRP and Tehiya, has always been "a political moralist and agonizer and has always felt guilty and uneasy about having bolted the NRP."

Hammer faction sources asked yesterday, "What sort of a rehabilitation is contemplated here, which seeks to leave an entire faction out?"

NEW SETTLEMENT, 'ERUVIN, ESTABLISHED

Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 6 Mar 84 p 2

[Article by Michael Eilan]

[Text]

GUSH ETZION. — A new West Bank settlement was established on Sunday in the form of three tents and a barbed wire perimeter.

Shilo Gal, chairman of the Gush Etzion Regional Council, which put up the new settlement of Eruvin, said the government and other agencies had approved the settlement and budgeted money for building, but these agencies were delaying work on the project, so the settlers had decided to move ahead.

Sources close to the Council of Settlements in Judea and Samaria said yesterday that Eruvin was established purely on the initiative of the Gush Etzion Regional Council.

Eruvin, with a name similar to nearby Ein Arube and the Arube refugee camp, is on a hilltop between Beit Omar and Halhoul, about six kilometres south of Gush Etzion.

Gal said that only state land has been used for the settlement. But Arab neighbours on the Hebron-Jerusalem road said yesterday that six dunams of their land had been expropriated to build the road that leads to the settlement.

Members of the Hanichein family, whose houses straddle a small bottleneck at the beginning of the road to the settlement, told *The*

Jerusalem Post yesterday that they fear their homes will be expropriated to clear the bottleneck.

It was unclear last night how many people are expected to live in Eruvin. Gal talked about plans for 150 families, while settlers on the site said 80 families would live on the 110 dunam plot. The husband in each family will be a member of the *kolel* (department for married students), of Har Etzion yeshiva.

Yisrael Bruchin, a council official, said yesterday that the settlers had decided to move to the hilltop now because Palestinians were "biting away at our land." He pointed to a ploughed area near the settlement and claimed that it was first cultivated when the Palestinians in the area learned of the plans to build Eruvin.

Near the entrance to Eruvin, Hussein Hanichein said: "This means that the era of fear has started. Once they build something they will probably want more."

His nephew, Omar Hanichein, was also gloomy. He said that they had first heard of the plans to build Eruvin four months ago and appealed to the civilian government, "but even the official they promised to send here didn't show up."

AVERAGE PRICES OF APARTMENTS ESCALATE

Tel Aviv NEWSVIEW in English No 10, 6 Mar 84 p 31

[Article by Ricky Cohen: "High-Rise Prices"]

[Text]

Part of the blame for last month's wild jump in the cost-of-living index lies in Israel's housing sector. According to the Central Bureau of Statistics the price rises in this sector totaled 20 percent, but this jump mainly reflects the rise in the cost of apartment services paid by apartment owners and the significant rise in key-money rates.

Let's take a closer look at what is happening in the field of housing — from the financial viewpoint — and of course, strictly in shekel terms. The Central Bureau of Statistics' periodical survey of housing — the main findings of which were included in its report on January's cost-of-living index — shows that the average prices paid for apartments in October through December 1983 were 40.4 percent higher than in the previous quarter, i.e. the period of July through September last year. As the figures in the accompanying chart show, the rise in apartment prices was not uniform throughout the country.

According to calculations by gov-

ernment statisticians, a standard one-and-a-half- to two-room apartment cost 3.022 million shekels in the last quarter of 1983, as compared to 1.600 million shekels in April through June of the same year. This is a rise of 88.9 percent in the cost of these small apartments. To avoid any misunderstanding it must be stressed that these statistics refer to the average rise in apartment prices, and not to particular apartments in any of the various cities and regions of Israel.

According to this same principle, the price of a two-and-a-half- to three-room apartments was 3.553 million shekels in the last three months of the past year, as compared to 2.047 million shekels half a year earlier. Thus, in the second half of 1983 the cost of these middle-sized apartments rose 73.6 percent. Larger apartments, three-and-a-half to four rooms cost 4.86 million shekels at the end of last year, while in the first half of the last year their average nationwide price was only 2.957 million shekels — a nominal rise

of only 64.4 percent.

However, all in all, the general rise in apartment prices — and this figure refers to all types of apartments, of all sizes and in every region of Israel — from April through June and from October through December 1983 totaled 76.7 percent.

Apartment prices, of course, rose at different rates in the various parts of Israel. The highest rise was in the suburbs of Haifa. There, between April through June and October through December 1983, the price of apartments

rose 127 percent. In the city of Haifa itself, the rise in apartment prices was 114 percent in the aforementioned period.

Apartment prices in Israel's capital city of Jerusalem rose 78.4 percent during those same six months, while apartment buyers in Tel Aviv paid 85.8 percent more than a half year earlier.

The most moderate rise in apartment prices last year was in the south: only 40 percent.

Here are some more details: in the Dan region apartment prices rose at an average rate of 80.4 percent in the last six months of 1983, while in the central region the average rise in apartment prices was 50.6 percent. On the other hand, in the Sharon region — which includes Herzliya, Netanya and Hadera — apartment prices climbed 80.5 percent.

THE CHANGE IN APARTMENT PRICES						
REGION	Number of Rooms in Apartment					
	1½-2		2½-3		3½-4	
	Mid '83	End '83	Mid '83	End '83	Mid '83	End '83
Jerusalem	1,899	3,582	2,329	3,847	3,659	5,262
Tel Aviv	1,883	3,840	2,544	4,585	3,709	6,737
Haifa	1,274	2,647	1,811	4,197	3,269	6,024
Dan Region	1,606	2,723	2,129	3,872	2,994	4,771
Central Region	1,465	—	2,051	3,305	2,884	—
South	832	1,040	1,309	1,784	2,054	3,120
Sharon Region	1,534	2,451	1,969	3,722	2,965	4,868
North	—	—	1,331	—	2,292	—
Haifa Suburbs	—	—	1,377	2,462	2,295	4,197

(The figures, in thousands of shekels, refer to average prices)

LEBANON OF TOMORROW DISCUSSED BY REPRESENTATIVES OF PARTIES, SECTS

Paris AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic No 367, 3 Mar 84 pp 17-19

[Article: "The Representatives of the Lebanese Sects and Parties Draw Up the Formula for the Lebanon of Tomorrow"]

[Text] By what method and possible means can Lebanon escape from its current state? What are the form and foundations of the political system suggested for Lebanon? What must Lebanon's relations be in the future with Syria and Israel?

These three great questions sum up the distance between the hell being experienced by the Lebanese and the dream of peace that entices them. Seven Lebanese personalities, who are active in the current crisis and represent the points of view of the factions, tried to answer these questions in the French newspaper LE MONDE, which, in a very rare gesture, devoted three complete pages last Sunday to their replies.

These are the seven personalities:

Taqi-al-Din al-Sulh is a former prime minister and an old-time politician. He was contemporary with and took part in the building of Lebanon on the foundation of the National Pact.

Ghassan Tuwayni is a journalist, a politician, and a former minister. He is the editor of the newspaper AL-NAHAR. He is not a member of a party or any particular political force, but he is known for his views, which sum up the position of his sect, the "Roman Orthodox".

'Akif Haydar is the head of the political office of the Amal movement, which is headed by Lawyer Nabih Birri. He is a former colonel in the Lebanese army, an engineer, and a lawyer. His views officially express the position of the Amal movement.

Antoine Mu'arbis is a member of the political office of the Phalange Party and a professor at the college of law. He presented the point of view of the Phalange Party.

Samir Franjiyah is a well known intellectual and the son of the late Lebanese leader Hamid Franjiyah, the brother of former President Sulayman Franjiyah. He answered the questions as a Maronite independent.

Karim Baqraduni is a member of the Phalange Party and a counselor to the Lebanese Forces. He is a lawyer and a former counselor of President Ilyas Sarkis. He was also close to the late President Bashir al-Jumayyil.

Marwan Hamadah is a former journalist and minister. He is a counselor who is close to Mr Walid Junblatt, the head of the Progressive Socialist Party.

One factor unites the seven answers. It is a desire to see Lebanon leave its crisis behind and submit to a surgical operation that would reestablish balance in its movements via a new formula that would take into account past political, social, and demographic developments.

However, according to one of the replies, a system of cantons would be best for Lebanon in the future. This idea was put forward by Karim Baqraduni.

Out of the seven voices, only one -- and perhaps for the first time ever -- clearly demanded the establishment of "normal relations with Israel." This point of view was put forward by Antoine Mu'arbas. As for the other six, they agreed unanimously that relations ranging from "distinctive and brotherly" to "normal" should be established with Syria.

AL-MUSTAQBAL, in a departure from its traditions, offers these answers as a borrowing from another newspaper. It does so in order to help to bring all Lebanese points of view to the Arab readership.

Taqi-al-Din al-Sulh

Former Prime Minister Taqi-al-Din al-Sulh bases his conception of the new Lebanon on the National Pact, which has been attacked by everyone. This includes both "the new generation, which is ignorant of it, and the old generation, which refuses to admit that it reversed the nature of its application and utilization."

Former Prime Minister al-Sulh listed the direct causes of the war that broke out in 1975 as follows: "The armed Palestinian presence divided the Lebanese." He indicated that despite everything, "the Muslims and the Christians were in implicit agreement on one common point: this presence had to be eliminated, and Lebanon could not be transformed into an alternate homeland." However, as it happened, "the Christians wanted to expel the armed Palestinians by force, while the Muslims fought alongside the Palestinians with the goal of helping them to regain their homeland."

"The Lebanese equation formed an alternative that was inconsistent with the Israeli conception of the state. This contrast turned into a special problem when the Palestinians put forward the example of Lebanon as an alternative to the racist state in Israel.

Antoine Mu'arbis

Professor Antoine Mu'arbis, a member of the political office of the Phalange Party, thinks that, "The only way to deliver Lebanon from its current crisis is to liberate its territory from the armed, foreign presence. This can be done by all means and via pressure by friendly states, organizations, and forces, as well as by armed resistance. By merely achieving liberation, the Lebanese can easily reach an understanding among themselves."

Mu'arbis confirmed that, "The agreement of 17 May 1983 sanctioned the withdrawal of the Israeli forces. This agreement has already been approved by the cabinet and the Chamber of Deputies. It cannot be tampered with unilaterally. Rather, it can only be altered by all of the parties (Israel, America and Lebanon)."

Therefore, Mu'arbis thought, "Syria has no right to oppose the agreement (?), for the following reasons:

- Its presence in Lebanon is illegitimate (?).
- Syria has no right to interest itself in a matter of concern only to the Lebanese authorities."

Concerning Lebanon's form and political system in the future, Mu'arbis had this to say, "It is too early to talk about the Lebanese political system in the future. However, it must be the subject of a dialogue among the different sects within the geographical framework, on the basis of equality of rights and commitment to the foundations of liberal democracy. At the same time, the existence and growth of the cultural multiplicity of the sects must be assured." He confirmed that his party does not support the ending of sectarianism in its political, administrative, federal, and confederal forms. He gave two reasons for rejecting the ending of sectarianism:

- It would prevent the application of secularism on all levels.
- It would lead to a dictatorship by a minority or a majority, as well as to the cancellation of freedoms, as has happened in many countries in the region.

Concerning his party's rejection of federalism and cantons, Mu'arbis said, "We support neither federalism nor cantons in a small country whose sects are mixed together, especially since the current system is based on sectarian federalism, not on geographic federalism."

With regard to Lebanon's new form and system, he said, "It must continue to have its current foundations, with a better distribution of the higher offices among the remaining sects (the Druze, the Roman Orthodox, the Armenians, etc.). We must set up a senate, a constitutional board, and a supreme court."

Concerning Lebanon's relations with its neighbors, Mu'arbis called clearly for "the establishment of normal relations with Israel, because it is a member of the United Nations and has no desire for Lebanese territory. Moreover, its presence in this part of the world represents a factor leading to technological, cultural, and economic progress." As for Syria, Mu'arbis called for "the establishment of full diplomatic relations" with it.

"The successive results of the Arabs' wars with Israel since 1948 were a factor. The losses suffered by the Arabs pushed the Christians to extend their hands to Israel, the enemy of the Arabs."

As for the indirect causes of the war, they were as follows.

The sectarian distribution of offices and authority was unjust for 14 sects. The first three posts were divided up among three sects: The Maronites, the Sunnis, and the Shi'is. They left nothing for the others to share. "In this way, we had people like Kamal Junblatt, who could not be anything more than a minister, since he was Druze."

Demographic growth during the last 30 years was a factor. It went in favor of the Shi'is, meaning that rights must be redistributed in accordance with this difference .

Progress was achieved by the Muslim sects on the social level, while their regions remained backward.

The Muslims felt that Christian officials were exercising their authority at the expense of the authority granted to Muslim officials.

Now, after all that has happened, and after all the sacrifices the Lebanese people have made, what new form will Lebanon take?

Former Prime Minister al-Sulh offered an equation that can be summed up as follows: "Any solution must be based on a principle that is not open to discussion. This is the necessity for the central regime to extend its authority over all the sects. This will not keep us from continuing to distribute the three leading offices to the Maronites, the Sunnis, and the Shi'is, but the following changes will be introduced:

1. The establishment of a senate to represent all the sects
2. The cancellation of sectarianism in employment
3. The preservation of parliamentary democracy. It is the only appropriate way to deal with multiplicity. However, sectarianism must be eliminated. Thus, the Chamber of Deputies will represent the Lebanese people, while the senate will represent the sects.
4. The application of administrative decentralization, under the condition that development policy will continue to be unified.

On the level of foreign policy, former Prime Minister al-Sulh thinks that the matter of Lebanon's affiliation is decisive: "Lebanon's affiliation is not open to doubts or questions. It is not a question of emotions, but interests. Though the reunification of Lebanon may be a difficult solution right now, its partition would be much harder. Therefore, Lebanon's safety lies in its unity. Let us forget about federalism or confederalism."

'Akif Haydar

'Akif Haydar began his disquisition and vision of Lebanon with the events of the southern suburb. He said, "One person is responsible for the current stage of the crisis. This official is the supreme commander of the armed forces and the president of the republic -- Amin al-Jumayyil. We insist on this to keep the tragedy of the southern suburb from becoming a day of remembrance in our history. We have demanded the resignation of the president of the republic and we insist on it. Let him go as he wills, or he will be banished by legal means."

Haydar suggested a two-point solution for escaping from the current stage of the crisis:

1. The 17 May agreement must be cancelled and the nation must be placed under arms with the goal of expelling the Israeli enemy, if it does not submit to security council resolutions 508 and 509.
2. The dialogue between the Lebanese factions in Geneva must be resumed in order to realize indispensable political, economic, and social reforms. These reforms will form the foundations of the Lebanon of tomorrow. They include the elimination of political sectarianism, the laying of the foundations of development, and the reorganization of the army.

As for achieving political justice in the sense of the equality of all the citizens, it would be done by "drawing up a new electoral system based on the notion that the result of the elections will be a real expression of the popular will. In order for this to happen, we are demanding that elections be held according to a national program, after the abolition of political sectarianism and sectarian shares." He added, "It does not matter to us if the system is presidential or parliamentary. Rather, it must be clear, not like it is now, with a presidential system as a fait accompli." Haydar demanded "the establishment of a balance between the different authorities. We are very concerned with the independence of the judiciary."

On the level of foreign relations, he said, "Our relations with Israel must not go beyond the formula of the armistice agreement signed in 1949. As long as Israel occupies our land and violates the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, it is not necessary for there to be relations outside this framework. With respect to Syria, the situation is different. Syrian-Lebanese relations must always be based on the Arabism of Lebanon and its affiliation to the League of Arab States. These relations can only be unique and brotherly. They must arise from destiny and common interests, on the condition that they are based on mutual respect."

Karim Baqraduni

For Baqraduni, the starting point is this: "The Lebanon of values, the Lebanon we knew, will not return. The numerous attempts made since the autumn of 1982 (when Bashir al-Jumayyil was elected president of the republic, to be followed by Amin al-Jumayyil) have failed. This includes the commitment by President Ronald Reagan. None of the attempts have produced a solution.

Several scenarios are on the horizon now:

1. The return to the situation pertaining in 1975. This would mean the disappearance of Lebanon, in favor of Greater Syria and Greater Israel.

2. We could go back to a unified state based on the "1943 equation." It seems this is unrealistic and cannot be implemented. Muslims and Christians can reach an understanding or live next to each other, but they cannot live together.

3. The solution remaining is Bashir al-Jumayyil's program. It is based on three principles:

-Lebanese territory must be liberated from the presence (Palestinian, Syrian, and Israeli).

-The national will must be unified around the idea of independence.

-The political system must be defined, while priority is granted to the cultural specificity of each sect. Instead of the explosive centralism of 1943, a system of cantons must be legislated. Thus, the Lebanese Forces suggest federalism as a solution to the negotiations being conducted in order to solve the Lebanese crisis. This choice is neither easy nor quick. It requires discovering the "spirit of resistance" that lived in Bashir al-Jumayyil. The Lebanese Forces are working to mobilize the Christian inhabitants, unify their ranks, and organize their social life. Moreover, the Lebanese Forces are calling on the Druze of the mountain and the Shi'ite Amal movement to work out new national pact that assures freedom, equality, and security to all the elements that make up this nation."

According to Baqraduni, "This solution is realistic. The country is currently divided into clear sectarian cantons. The Maronites, Shi'is, and Druze, who make up two-thirds of the population of Lebanon, have their own military institutions and control a large part of the country's territory. Currently, there are at least six cantons:

1. A Shi'i canton located to the south of the Israeli lines
2. A Shi'i canton located in the Biqa', up to the Syrian lines
3. A Christian canton controlled by the Lebanese forces
4. A Christian canton controlled by Su'ayman Franjiyah
5. A Sunni canton in Tripoli and 'Akkar
6. A Druze canton in the Shuf

As for Beirut, it continues to be the federal capital of Lebanon."

Since "the National Pact signed in 1943 was the fruit of agreement between the Maronites and the Sunnis, the federal solution must be worked out by the Maronites and the Shi'is, who make up the majority. Everyone of us must feel that he is safe in his home, while simultaneously remaining among others.

The right to differ must be recognized for all. The Lebanese Muslims in particular must see this. There can be neither Islamization nor Zionization. This is the other Lebanon suggested by the Lebanese Forces."

Marwan Hamadah

"For 9 years, the Lebanese crisis has seen all possible fronts and all the masks one can imagine. After all that has happened, one can say that many victims have fallen, while the masks of selfishness and the artificial reconciliations have fallen away. For 10 years, a party hungry for power, and I mean the Phalange Party, has given the war all possible foreign dimensions, so that it could flee from the real dimension, which is the internal one.

"The real core of the conflict is based on the same foundations as Lebanon. I am referring to a mixture of three elements: independence, democracy, and Arabism. Without these three basic elements, there is no reason for Lebanon to exist or survive. If these basic elements are cut off, the existence of Lebanon is disturbed.

"The first time, it occurred under the excuse of combating the armed Palestinian presence. This was done to flee from the changes that had to be made on the political, economic, and social levels, as a result of the demographic change that had occurred.

"The second time was when the alliance with Israel was established, preparing the way for the siege of Beirut. In this way, Lebanon lost its Arab face and became a star circling in the Israeli orbit.

"Lebanon will be for all or it will not be at all. The era of ignoring the other sects has passed, as has the possibility of reaching agreement on the basis of two parties, as happened in 1943. Any agreement made today must be based on the following foundations:

1. The cancellation of the 17 May agreement, because any impairment of the Arab character of Lebanon is also an impairment of its independence and identity.
2. The one-party dictatorship must be abolished. This does not at all mean tampering with the rights of the Christians. 'Democratic, enlightened, liberal Christian authority' is not what must be abolished.
3. The institution must be developed. We must have either a complete secular state or the application of "sectarian democracy" as a first step toward the ideal situation.
4. All the foreign forces must be withdrawn. However, the Israeli troops must go first. Under no circumstances can the Syrian forces be put in the same category as the Israeli forces. Syria remains our brother and neighbor. Through it and by means of mutual respect, we affirm our Arab commitment.

"With respect to the south, a solution through the United Nations might be desirable."

Marwan Hamadah completed his vision of the new Lebanon by affirming once more that, "Through independence, democracy, and Arabism, Lebanon will have the luck to find itself once again."

Ghassan al-Tuwayni

"What we are experiencing in Lebanon is a new war. It can be added to the series of wars that began in 1975." Ghassan al-Tuwayni asked, "Can we recreate Lebanon, though we were not able to build it in 1976, 1978 and 1982?"

"First and foremost, in order to recreate Lebanon, we must forget the idea or delusion of the "Lebanese miracle". Miracles on the level of nations are worked by officials and peoples."

Al-Tuwayni gave his definition of the choice Lebanon faces. He said, "Organically, we should prevent partition. Rather, we must rebuild the unity of a Lebanon divided into parts. "Centralized" Lebanon must accept the new facts, for there are separate groups like the Shi'is in the south, the Druze in the Shuf, and the Sunnis in the north. They are definitely ruled by illegitimate authorities, but these authorities are effective and more realistic than the central government."

Nevertheless, "Good can be born of evil. The national dialogue can assume ahead of time the achievement of peace, but peace itself is linked to a new balance of forces. One can say that via the establishment of a new, organic balance based on a new covenant, the Lebanese can exercise their national sovereignty over all Lebanese territory. There are now two conflicting factors:

"The first is the alliance among the Lebanese. The second is the alliance among the foreign interests. Whichever triumphs, we must hope that the Lebanese will close ranks before it is too late."

With regard to Lebanon's foreign relations, Ghassan al-Tuwayni distinguished himself from the others by advocating the principle of Lebanese neutrality. This would be internationally guaranteed neutrality. It could become an ideal situation in which to reestablish national unity. It would be a unity characterized by multiplicity, but the differences would give the system greater impetus.

Al-Tuwayni had this to say about Lebanon after the war: "After the war will come the revolution, practically speaking. The war, or the successive wars, will go out as long as the big problems are on fire as published, but as soon as peace stabilized, the dimensions of the tragedy will appear. We will then have to rebuild the country, city by city and village by village. The young people born during the war will have to be re-educated on how to work with each other. Moreover, the warlords, who will have lost their credibility, will have to give way to the new generations." Al-Tuwayni concluded by saying, "This war will only end when the Lebanese wake up to the facts of today."

Samir Franjiyah

"The control achieved by the Shi'ite Amal movement over West Beirut has shown just how unrealistic it was to try to create a state based outside the framework of the country's sectarian and religious structure. The authorities take their legitimacy from the sects that form Lebanese society. The last agreement was made in 1943 and slightly amended in 1958. However, it began to be questioned in 1975. Therefore, the first task of the president of the republic was to define a new national covenant."

After this introduction, Franjiyah went on to say, "President Amin al-Jumayyil did not do that, since he preferred to give priority to achieving withdrawal by the Israelis and Syrians. Now the Muslims have taken up arms. First the Druze and then the Shi'is have felt that the Phalange Party wanted to impose its hegemony. After all this, can one say that the situation has reached an impasse?"

Franjiyah answered this question by saying, "The battle of Beirut has created a new situation:

1. The Shi'ite sect, whose importance the regime has so far refused to recognize, has demonstrated its ability to bear responsibility and maintain Christian-Muslim coexistence in West Beirut.
2. The military solution has become impossible (especially given the recent situation of the army and the withdrawal of the multinational force.)
3. The weakness of the Lebanese Forces and Israel's paralysis have facilitated the growth of a current supporting coexistence with Islam and the Arab world. The spiritual authorities have shown that they are oriented toward this option by contacting the Muslim spiritual leaders."

Concerning the reforms that must be made, Samir Franjiyah said, "Authority must be redistributed in a more balanced fashion among the different Lebanese sects, as the prime minister has suggested. The search for a new national reconciliation requires us to define Lebanon's relations with the surrounding area." Franjiyah said, "No matter what kind of regime they have in Syria, Lebanon must have distinctive relations with it, for historic, cultural and geopolitical reasons."

Concerning relations with Israel, Franjiyah said, "After all the pain Lebanon has suffered as a result of the Israeli invasion in 1982, what Walid Junblatt said defines this relationship: Let the Israeli forces be withdrawn, and we will prevent military operations against northern Israel."

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BKIRKI DECLARATION ANALYZED, COMPARED

Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 3 Mar 84 p 11

[Article by Lawyer 'Abd-al-'Aziz Qabbani: "Bkirki Recommendations: Pros and Cons"]

[Text] The Christian conference held in Bkirki and concluded on 21 January 1984 has presented a working paper containing principles and recommendations which reflect in some of their aspects the essential points of internal disagreement among the Lebanese. We have the following observations on this paper:

The Bkirki conference recommendations contain numerous positive features, such as:

1. Rejecting partition and clinging to Lebanon's borders and entity as defined by the Lebanese constitution.
2. Opening up to the world and opening up to each other primarily.
3. Clinging to the democratic parliamentary republican system and to the principles of equality, justice and equal opportunities for all Lebanese without discrimination and providing the opportunity to every faction of the citizens to realize its distinctive personality within the framework of the law and the constitution, provided this achievement does not revive and develop destructive sectarian fanaticism and provided that every faction realizes what is most sublime and what is best in it for the good of all Lebanese and of mankind.
4. Abiding by the human rights charter.
5. Projecting the principle of secularization and of the abolition of sectarianism within a national dialogue, provided that this projection is not intended as an act of one-upmanship vis-a-vis the Orthodox sect's working paper and is not used to make the wrong conclusions conveying the idea that secularization dictates that a part of the Lebanese abandon their religion because of its alleged contradiction with secularization.
6. Lebanon's adherence to the free economic system while emphasizing the state's role in regulation, control and planning to prevent domination, exclusion and monopolization.

7. Adoption of administrative decentralism.

8. The right of every evicted Lebanese to return to his home and to his source of livelihood.

9. Supremacy of the law over all, with no distinction and no privilege (and this requires completing the law on the trial of presidents and ministers before the Supreme Court and the establishment of the court to determine the constitutionality of laws).

But the continued privileges, the clinging to the national plan and the continued monopolization of the presidency of the republic by a single sector turns some of the positive features of these recommendations into negative features.

Drawbacks: the recommendations contain the following negative features:

First, the Bkirki conference, by convening after the Geneva conference, by failing to tie its recommendations to the Geneva conference resolutions, by failing to note the Geneva conference, by including in its recommendations provisions conflicting with the Geneva conference resolutions and by calling for holding an alternative conference, namely an Islamic-Christian conference--by doing this, the Bkirki conference has rejected not only the Geneva conference and the resolutions it has issued regarding Lebanon's Arabism and regarding the 17 May accord but has also rejected implicitly convocation of the second Geneva conference.

This rejection of the Geneva conference by disregarding it and by leaping over it, despite its importance in terms of its Lebanese, Arab and international dimensions and in terms of its decisive impact on Lebanon's security and stability, raises doubts regarding the intentions and strips away the credibility of the Christian conference and of any call it issues, including the call for an Islamic-Christian conference. This raises the question: What is the guarantee that an Islamic-Christian conference will produce better resolutions than those of the Geneva conference? Moreover, what is the guarantee that adherence to the resolutions of such a conference will be sincerer than the adherence to the Geneva resolutions?

These are the resolutions denounced and rejected by the Lebanese Front even before their ink had dried on paper and even though the Front was represented in the conference and approved its resolutions through its representatives.

Second, the Bkirki conference has not emerged with a clear and frank position regarding Lebanon's Arabism, contrary to the Geneva conference. Arabism is one of the most important points of internal disagreement, considering that Arabism is one of the mainstays of Lebanon's emergence and survival. The conference has rejected the National Bloc Party's paper presented to the said conference on Lebanon's Arabism--a paper stating explicitly that Lebanon is an "Arab state that is a member of the Arab League and that abides by the League's charter." Meanwhile, this conference's resolutions state the following regarding the United Nations: "Lebanon is an active and founding member of the United Nations and it abides by this organization's charter."

The Bkirki conference paper does not state that Lebanon abides by the Arab League charter, as it has done in connection with the United Nations organization, even though the League is a regional organization accredited by article 52 of the UN charter. The paper is content with stating the following: "A founding and active member of the Arab League, establishing its cooperation with the League members on the basis of mutual respect and of the independence, sovereignty, laws and regulations of each member." This means non-abidance by the League's charter and, consequently, by its resolutions!

This part of the resolutions does not acknowledge Lebanon's Arabism as clearly as the Geneva resolutions do, or at least as stipulated in the National Bloc's paper. Lebanon being a founding and active member of the Arab League does not constitute an acknowledgement of Lebanon's Arabism in a clear, explicit and direct manner because if Lebanon departs from the League as a result of the 17 May accord, of any similar accord or of permanent and legal international neutrality, then what would become of its Arabism?

Here is where the motive not to stipulate in the resolutions Lebanon's abidance by the Arab League charter is understood. Such abidance is in conflict with the provisions of the 17 May accord that prohibit Lebanon from abiding by whatever is in contradiction with these provisions. This is why the recommendations underline Lebanon's "laws and regulations." When the 17 May accord is concluded, it becomes one of these laws that must be observed and implemented. This accord has stripped away Lebanon's Arabism by stripping away its Arab commitments.

This is also where the motive for totally disregarding the Geneva resolutions--resolutions which center on Lebanon's Arabism and the 17 May accord, reaffirming Lebanon's Arabism in a clear, explicit and direct manner that cannot be subject to any interpretation, contrary to the 17 May accord--is understood.

Third, the conference has also insisted on the other point of internal disagreement, namely that Lebanon is a country with numerous cultures, when it stated in its resolutions that Lebanon is the "meeting place of cultures and religions."

A. Lebanon is not the meeting place of cultures. Cultures do not leave their lands to meet in Lebanon or in any other country. What leaves its lands to meet in Lebanon are the products of culture, such as cars, refrigerators, televisions sets, aircraft, books and so forth. But cultures, such as inventions, innovations and creations, remain in their own lands. Knowing the theoretical principles through learning and teaching is education, not culture.

Education [al-thaqafah], in its capacity as the knowledge of civilization, is transferred from one society to another through teaching and adoption. Culture is not transferrable. Knowing culture as a whole and with all its cultural innovations is impossible because culture is diverse on the one hand and man's life is limited on the other. (See our book "Lebanon and the Tragic Charter," page 205 and onward).

This is why education is confined to one or more branches of culture or of its complete elements, such as being confined to medicine, engineering, philosophy,

physics, chemistry, history or religion. This is called educational specialization.

When educational specialization leads to innovation, invention, creation and discovery, it turns into culture. Knowing this culture is education and education is transferrable through learning and adoption. But culture is not transferrable because it is the product of creativity and not the product of study and adoption. What is transferred is culture's product. Culture occurs once and is not repeated but its product can be reproduced repeatedly and continually.

Thus, the Bkirki conference, to be precise and scientific in its words and thought, should have said that Lebanon, like any other country, is a "meeting place of educations" not of "cultures." Had the conference said this, its statement would not have cast doubts and, consequently, would not have aroused disagreement over the Arabism of Lebanon and of its Arab cultures. Initiation of the instruction of so-called Lebanese literature is no more than the start of separation from Arabism and its cultures and literature today and from its philosophy, sciences and the rest of its heritage tomorrow.

This separation may be easy. But it is difficult, rather impossible, to disavow the tribalism ['asabiyah] of Arabism and, consequently, to disavow the Arab mentality. The war of Dahis and al-Ghabra' [tribal war over a horse race in pre-Islamic era] is still recurring in various forms and shapes among the Lebanese as a result of their tribalism and infighting. Sectarianism and its privileges are a "perfect" model of Arab tribalism and its "vigor."

B. Lebanon is not the meeting place of religions. This phrase is also inaccurate because Lebanon's religions are an indigenous part of the country and of its historical makeup as part of the area and are not imported to it.

Therefore, it is impermissible to tie the presence of religions in Lebanon to the claim of the presence of cultures, especially modern western culture, in it. The only culture existing in Lebanon is the Arab culture which is the product of all the civilizations preceding it, with their values, their tribalism and their cultures.

The purpose of tying the non-existent cultural multiplicity to the existing religious multiplicity is to attribute realism and credibility to the cultural multiplicity and to give the false impression that it exists the way religious multiplicity exists.

The multiplicity of religions in Lebanon has a positive quality, namely the quality of cultural interaction, if religion is not politicized. But if we politicize religion, then we factionalize and sectarianize it and turn the cultural interaction into a violent and aggressive interaction, generating in it by necessity the destructive religious and factional tribalism for which the enemy censures us. Religion then loses its positive quality because it becomes, in this case, an instrument of destruction in the hands of Lebanon's internal and external enemies and the enemies of national unity and an instrument to demolish the foundations and mainstays of the homeland. This religion, by its nature, produces fragmentation and divisive human distinction and separation.

With what is secular [madani], not religious, we can build the country's political and social unity and through this unity, the country's destiny and future. What is secular is general and comprehensive. Therefore, it is unifying whereas what is religious is special and, therefore, divisive.

With what is secular we safeguard both the homeland and religion and with what is religious we lose both the homeland and religion. This is why we must make a choice and with this choice either foil or facilitate the enemy's schemes.

Fourth, the Bkirki conference has insisted, though in vague words, that the disagreement is not an internal disagreement among the Lebanese but is rather the disagreement of others on Lebanon's soil. This insistence is one of the points of the internal disagreement, considering the changes and the elimination of privileges tied to this disagreement.

The conference has said the following: "Amidst the tragedies the Lebanese have been suffering for more than 9 years as a result of the wars that have erupted on their land and that have inflicted and continue to inflict death and injury on the Lebanese every day..."

The holding of the conference itself and the recommendations issued by it, especially the call for holding an Islamic-Christian conference, confirm that the disagreement is internal and independent of the outside world. If the principles were implemented and if there were no disagreement over them internally, there would be no need to mention them as a basis of building the new Lebanon and putting an end to the fighting.

Fifth, the Bkirki conference has adopted the Israeli viewpoint calling for the withdrawal of all the occupying armies simultaneously, thus equating the Syrian army's presence with the Israeli army's presence. This is another point of internal disagreement. The conference has made no distinction and has set no priorities for withdrawal by calling vaguely for "liberating all the Lebanese territories from the existing occupations and from any illegal and alien presence." This determination does not herald relaxation or agreement with Syria's influence in Lebanon and the Arab and international support for Syria's policy in Lebanon, but gives the rifle the decisive word.

Sixth, the recommendations contain paragraphs conflicting with the Maronite sect's clinging to the position of president of the republic, such as the paragraph stating that "the system of government in Lebanon is a republican, democratic and parliamentary system that respects all religions and guarantees the practice of religions without adopting any of them as its religion."

It is true that the constitution contains no provision dictating that the president of the republic be from a certain religion or sect so as to guarantee the unity and equality of the Lebanese. However, the monopolization of this position by the Maronites has undermined the principle of equality, the exposing the unity of the Lebanese to danger, exposing Lebanon to disintegration and practically making the Maronite sect the religion of the state and of its president, contrary to the constitution.

In this case, there is no difference whether the constitution dictates this or if factional and sectarian tribalism wants it under the threat of partitioning and destroying Lebanon.

What is intended by the provision "without adopting any of them as its religion?" Is it intended to mean the Maronite sect's relinquishment of the position of president of the republic, the secularization of this position and opening the position to all the Lebanese as a symbol of their unity and as article 7 of the constitution wants it--a position not monopolized by any religion or sect so that it may not arouse the sensitivity of the other religions or sects by conflicting with their dictates.

If this is what is intended, then the movement toward ending the disagreement between the Lebanese has become serious. But in his interview with AL-FIKR AL-ISLAMI--an interview published in AL-SAFIR's edition of 5 February 1984--Cardinal Khuraysh does not confirm this intention in his interpretation and explanation of the recommendations issued by the Bkirki conference. Neither does the message of the president of the republic, dated 6 February 1984, in which the president presented the constitutional charter entrenching the privileges.

Seventh, the recommendations state that "Lebanon belongs to all its resident and expatriate citizens and they all owe it the duty of complete loyalty. They are all also entitled to participate in its political and social life."

This paragraph raises the following questions:

1. Who is the expatriate? Is the expatriate who has relinquished his Lebanese identity, gained a new identity and merged in his new society educationally, culturally, politically, linguistically, emotionally, economically, administratively and in terms of taxes--is this expatriate still a Lebanese who owes Lebanon the duty of complete loyalty and who is entitled to participation in [Lebanon's] political and social life? How can that loyalty and this participation be envisioned and how do they take place? Rather, how could such an expatriate be Lebanese? Is this not an acknowledgement of dual loyalty, exactly as Zionism has?

2. A distinction must be made between Lebanon as an abstract homeland and Lebanon's real political and sectarian system. Loyalty to the political and sectarian system is tantamount to loyalty to the privileges and is rejected. Loyalty to the abstract Lebanon is loyalty to an illusion and flows ultimately into the mill of loyalty to the privileges. For the loyalty to be real, i.e., to be a commitment, a sacrifice, an acceptance and an interest, the political system has to be founded on the following: 1) equality in citizenship; 2) democracy; 3) justice. It should not be founded on privileges.

3. To eliminate duality in loyalty to Lebanon, the multiple citizenship law must be abolished. This law permits the Lebanese to acquire more than one citizenship in addition to his Lebanese citizenship and to be loyal to a homeland other than Lebanon. This law, coupled with the sectarian system and with the tribalism it contains, permits the Lebanese to combine his loyalty for his

homeland, Lebanon, with his loyalty for another homeland or with his loyalty to his sect.

As long as the law permits multiple loyalty, then why is the Lebanese permitted to have a homeland in America, Australia or Africa to which he is sympathetic and is not permitted to have an Arab homeland to which he is sympathetic? Why is Americanism permitted and Arabism prohibited? Acceptance of the principle of multiple loyalty dictates that its consequences also be accepted. The logic is the same indivisible logic.

Eighth, the passage in the recommendations urging the need to "establish Lebanon's foreign policy on clear principles that spare it division and subservience" provides as much substance for disagreement as it suggests that the policy of neutrality must be adopted. This very policy of neutrality is a subject of disagreement and discord because it dictates that Israel and the Arab countries be treated equally and "without discrimination," according to the provisions of the 17 May accord.

Ninth, on the occasion of speaking of the Bkirki Christian conference, we must pause before the Orthodox sect's working paper of 17 October 1983. This paper, with the ideas and principles it contained, was a distinguished paper in several ways, including the following:

1. "As a sect, the Orthodox sect in Lebanon has not found its natural extension in any party or organization." This confirms this sect's independence from any party or organization.
2. "Declaring that the fact of Lebanon's belonging to the Arab world and the Orient is a lasting fact."

This denies the cultural multiplicity of Lebanon and reaffirms that Lebanon's culture is an Arab oriental culture.

3. "Projecting the principle of secularization and of the abolition of political sectarianism in a free and frank national dialogue."

Thus, the Orthodox sect's paper is the first sectarian paper to project secularism and to underline that this sect is truly independent of any political party or organization.

4. "Abidance on the part of Lebanon by the international declaration of human rights and the inclusion of this declaration in the text of the constitution." This is an advanced, humane position. The paper does not project this with the purpose of propaganda or to cover up its non-existent privileges.

Tenth, as long as we are discussing the resolutions of the Bkirki Christian conference and their call for an Islamic-Christian conference, a comparison must be made between the Bkirki resolutions and the recommendations of the Islamic conference, issued by the Mufti's Office in Beirut on 23 February 1984, and between the contrast, rather the fundamental contradiction, they contain. This contrast, or fundamental contradiction, centers around the following points:

First, regarding the Arabism of Lebanon: The Bkirki recommendations refuse to adhere to the Arab League charter. This refusal is in harmony with their abidance by the provisions of the 17 May accord. Meanwhile, the Islamic conference resolutions believe that the National Charter "commits Arab Lebanon to the Arab League charter."

Second, regarding the 17 May accord: The Bkirki recommendations make no mention of the 17 May accord whereas the Islamic conference resolutions demand that the 17 May accord be abrogated or, to be more precise legally, not be concluded.

Third, regarding Syria: The Bkirki resolutions make no mention of relations with Syria, but rather say "establish relations with every country that respects Lebanon's identity and heritage." Lebanon's heritage is not, in the view of the resolutions, the Arab heritage whereas the Islamic conference resolutions call for preserving the relations with Syria in a manner that safeguards Lebanon's interests and reaffirms the fraternal pan-Arab bonds between the two countries. The words "pan-Arab bonds" underline Lebanon's Arabism in the pan-Arab sense.

Fourth, regarding withdrawals: The Bkirki recommendations put Israel and Syria on an equal footing by calling for simultaneous withdrawals whereas the Islamic conference resolutions make the distinction that Syria is an Arab state, do not make a mention of its withdrawal and, contrary to the Bkirki conference, do not view it as an occupying country but as a country that has distinguished relations with Lebanon.

Consequently, there is a deep gap between the recommendations and the resolutions--a gap that confirms clearly and explicitly that the disagreement between the Lebanese is an internal disagreement revolving over fundamental issues, especially if we add to them the privileges. This makes the advocated Islamic-Christian conference futile and a waste of time--a conference which will do no more than issue courteous words and express wishes that do more to mislead than to build and lay down foundations. Assuming for the sake of argument that such a conference does issue positive, explicit and direct resolutions concerning the points of disagreement we have mentioned, then there is nothing to insure abidance by whatever resolutions are issued, as has happened with the Geneva resolutions. There are changing facts in the Lebanese reality that must be comprehended and understood by all.

8494

CSO: 4404/368

NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF AIRPORT, SEAPORT CLOSINGS EXAMINED

Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 5 Mar 84 p 6

[Article by 'Adnan al-Hajj: "Effects of Airport and Seaport Closings on Economy and Workers; Insurance Companies Raise Their Rates for Beirut's Two Facilities"]

[Text] For the past 29 days, since 6 February 1984 specifically, Beirut's airport and seaport have been totally idle, except for the registered entry of two wheat ships to the seaport and the departure of two Middle East Airlines planes from the airport. One of the two aircraft unloaded medical aid and press reporters and the other carried pilots, stewards and stewardesses who will work on two Jumbo jets leased to Gulf Air and Saudi Airways.

With the talk about the imminent resumption of activity in these two facilities in light of the optimism displayed as a result of the ongoing political negotiations in Beirut and Damascus, it is necessary to examine the ramifications of the closure of the airport and seaport to the conditions of the employees and workers on the one hand and to the economic situation and the losses of the sectors concerned with these two facilities on the other hand.

Airport

The airport has experienced longer periods of closure than those experienced by the seaport, especially in the second half of 1983 when the airport stopped its operations for 76 days, compared to 29 days during the month of February 1984.

These closures have had their negative effects on the employees and workers of Middle East Airlines and of TMA [Trans-Mediterranean Airlines].

The management of these two companies has deducted certain percentages of the employees' salaries, amounting in some cases to 50 percent, keeping in mind the difference in the measures taken by each company.

Middle East Airlines management has deducted 50 percent of the salaries and the vacations, with the provision that whatever is deducted be paid when the Beirut Airport resumes its operations. This is what has happened for the closure periods in 1983.

TMA management has deducted 50 percent of the salaries since the final months of 1983 and this measure is still in force, noting that this company has not resumed its operations from and to Beirut since the final months of last year because of the decline in air freight activity on the one hand and the occupation of the [U.S.] marines command of the areas surrounding the company buildings.

These measures have been coupled with notices of termination of service sent by the company management to nearly 400 employees, pilots and workers under the pretext of the losses incurred and of the company's inability to absorb this number of workers.

Salim Salam, the chairman of the Middle East Airlines Board of Directors, has told AL-SAFIR that the closure periods in 1983 cost the company a loss of 148 million [Lebanese] pounds, at the rate of 2 million pounds daily, and that the loss rate in the latest closing, i.e. since 6 February and until the present, has dropped to nearly 1.5 million pounds daily as a result of the measures taken by the company to squeeze expenditures, especially the measure deducting 50 percent of the employees' salaries and vacations, in addition to reducing other expenses, such as suspending flights from foreign airports.

Concluding, Salam said: The company's losses during the ending month of February and the first days of the current month of March have amounted to 48 million pounds.

On the other hand, a TMA source has said that the company lost 50 million pounds in 1983 and that it is losing 150,000 pounds daily [at present].

This source noted that the company will resume its operations at Beirut Airport as soon as the airport is opened, if general conditions permit such resumption.

Moreover, the closure of the airport has left its impact on the airport's activity as a whole and has led to restrictions on the national companies, the most important being:

1. Preventing Middle East Airlines Jumbo jets from landing at Beirut Airport as a result of the new conditions imposed by British insurance companies, especially by their doubling the insurance premiums being currently paid by the airlines with the new premium amounting to \$12 million annually.

This is something that the company cannot afford and these premiums have compelled it to suspend the Jumbo flights from Beirut Airport and, consequently, to lease these aircraft to Saudi Airways and Gulf Air.

2. Most foreign [airline] companies have stopped coming to Beirut Airport as a result of the reports circulated by the foreign insurance companies saying that Beirut Airport is an unsafe area. Exhaustive efforts will be required to persuade the foreign companies to return to Beirut Airport in return for facilities offered jointly by the local companies and the Ministry of Public Works and Transportation.

It is to be noted in this regard that the East European airlines are always forerunners in returning to Beirut Airport for several reasons, the most important being that they are state-owned companies which implement the policy of the country concerned.

3. The suspension of imports by air as a result of suspension of TMA operations on the one hand and the operations of the foreign companies on the other. This will have its impact on the importation of goods that need to be shipped quickly and that cannot be delayed.

Seaport

The suspended operations in Beirut Port have exposed several issues connected with the supply and economic situation, especially since Lebanese import activities take place through the seaport. This has been reflected in higher prices for foodstuffs and essential goods. This is why notable personalities have demanded that Beirut Port, and then Beirut Airport, be neutralized again.

These demands have come as a result of the complaints voiced by the merchants regarding the difficulties and additional fees they shoulder from unloading their [imported] goods in neighboring seaports, both legal and illegal. The Ministry of Economy and Commerce has received numerous complaints from the importers who have linked their raising the prices of their goods to the closure of Beirut Port, noting meanwhile that the delay in letting the wheat ships into the port nearly led to a bread crisis last week.

Moreover, the suspension of operations in Beirut Port has begun to take its toll on the employees and workers of the Beirut Port Management and Utilization Company, considering that the company is evading payment of the workers' and employees' salaries without offering any explanation for this measure, especially since the salaries of the workers were not deducted [stopped] even during the 2-year war or during the long closure periods experienced by Beirut Port in 1976.

The employees have begun to check with their superiors regarding the salaries of last February, but without being able to get any frank answer from any management officer. Some labor sources have told AL-SAFIR that upon checking on this issue with the officials, these officials asserted that payment of the salaries is tied to reopening the port, citing the pretext of the unavailability of the funds needed to pay the salaries, amounting to nearly 4 million pounds monthly, at a time when the port fees collected by the company management last January amounted to nearly 11 million pounds.

Joseph al-Khazin, the company's investment manager, has told AL-SAFIR that the salaries issue is up to Henri Far'awn, the chairman of the Board of Directors, and to the Board of Directors as a whole and that the company's high-ranking officers have nothing to do with this issue.

It is to be noted here that the law governing the utilization of Beirut Port states that in case the company is unable to pay the employees' salaries, the state shall secure the necessary funds through a treasury loan because the

port is under the guardianship of the Ministries of Water Resources and Electricity and of Public Works and Transportation.

Engineer Baha'-al-Din al-Bisat, the minister of water resources and electricity, has said in reply to a question on this issue that he will tackle the issue with the people concerned.

He added: We have already dealt with the issue of the deduction of the salaries of workers who did not show up for work during the deteriorating security conditions and we stopped deduction of the salary of any employee. We will secure the salaries of the employees and hope to settle this issue very shortly.

A management source at the Beirut Port Utilization Company has told AL-SAFIR that from the time the port stopped operating on 6 February 1984 and until the present, the company has lost nearly 9 million pounds, at the rate of 350,000 pounds collected daily in port fees and other fees for services rendered by the company.

The source has also noted that there are nearly 2,000 employees and workers whose salaries the company cannot afford to pay at present in case the port's operations continue to be suspended, especially since the company is repaying loans it had acquired previously, particularly in 1976 and 1977--all of which saddles the company with additional burdens which it cannot shoulder.

Moreover, the Beirut Port situation and its suspended operations will have economic ramifications summed up in the following:

1. Refrainment on the part of merchants from importing new goods and their being content with the goods for which contracts have already been concluded as a result of the conditions that will be dictated by ships or by shipping companies to come to Beirut Port, especially since some insurance companies have raised their insurance premiums for ships coming to the port. This is what happened with the grain freighter (Marquis) which was compelled by the British Lloyds Company to pay an additional 5 percent in insurance premiums in return for being permitted to enter Beirut Port to unload its cargo.

This has motivated some industrialists and merchants to divert their goods to the neighboring ports and to store them there while waiting for the area's security situation to clear up.

2. Reluctance on the part of the major shipping lines to deal with Beirut Port since some foreign embassies have hastened, as usual, to ask the ships flying the flags of their countries to be careful in dealing with Beirut Port. This is in addition to the new conditions imposed by the insurance companies on these shipping lines--conditions that will force the lines to change their destinations and, consequently, stop operating regular routes to Beirut Port.

3. A drop in the transit movement and, consequently, in the re-exportation movement. This will have an impact on the revenues of the grain silos. We should keep in mind that Beirut Port had re-established contact with nearly 225 international ports and had been operating at nearly 70 percent the rate of its activity prior to the eruption of the first Lebanese events.

8494

CSO: 4404/367

IMPROVEMENTS REPORTED IN GOLD, FOREIGN CURRENCY RESERVES

Dubayy KHALEEL TIMES in English 8 Mar 84 p 4

[Article by P. S. Ramanathan]

[Text]

THERE has been a RO 39.1-million improvement in Oman's gold and foreign currency reserves in 1983, as compared to the previous year, and this can be deemed as an indication of the healthy state of national economy.

From RO 440.6 million (\$1.27 billion) in 1982, the reserves went up to RO 479.7 million (\$1.38 billion) by the end of 1983, according to the quarterly bulletin of the Central Bank of Oman.

Assets and liabilities of commercial banks rose by RO 130 million—from RO 880 million (\$2.57 billion) to RO 1.01 billion (\$2.91 billion) in 1983.

The country's narrowly-defined money supply, M-1, rose by 10.4 per cent, to RO 282.3 million (\$816 million), as compared to a 17.4 per cent increase in 1982.

M-1 comprises currency in circulation and demand deposits.

As for M-2, the more broadly-defined aggregate which also includes time deposits at banks, it rose by 19.8 per cent to RO 665.3 million (\$1.92 billion), following a 25 per cent rise in 1982.

The consumer price index for the Capital area dipped by 2.3 per cent in 1983. Viewed in the backdrop of a 2.75 per cent inflationary tendency that was in evidence in the previous year, the development on the price front can be termed as reassuring. The index, based on the second half of 1978, stood at 113.2 at the end of 1983 as compared to 115.5 in 1982.

* * *

THERE is heartening news on the manufacturing front. Oman's first detergent factory, at Al Ghubrah, midway through Muscat and Seeb airport in the Capital area, has gone into regular production.

The full-fledged Omani enterprise, National Detergent Co. Ltd, can take pride on more than one count—there is no technology transfer or foreign investment/franchise involved, and the plant can more than meet the country's need of synthetic detergents, which used to be imported till now.

Oman's estimated requirement of detergents is in the vicinity of 4000 tonnes per year. It can be met by operating on a single-shift basis, according to NDC Chairman Abdul Hussein Bhacker. There is thus scope for developing a good export market.

The factory has been on trial run for a month, and the "Bahar" detergent powder has been received well in interior Oman, it is said. Priced at 100 baisa for a 200-gm pack in retail, the Omani product works out at least 40 per cent cheaper than its imported counterparts.

General Manager Kishore Asthana says that in a phased manner, packs of 400 gm, 1.250 kg, 3 kg and 5 kg are to be introduced. The production range also would be widened to include industrial detergents, both in liquid and solid consistencies. Already, there are inquiries from major industries like the Sohar copper complex and Petroleum Development Oman, for such industrial detergents, it is understood.

Unilever Exports of UK which markets Surf and Autosurf in many countries including Oman, has meanwhile, entered into a production agreement with NDC.

In keeping with the Sultanate's policy of protection to infant manufacturing industries, National Detergents can expect a duty to be imposed on imported counterparts. "In due course, our worth will be borne out by our performance, quality and price," says Director Jawad Sultan. "It is our endeavour to firstly take care of the country's needs, in quality and quantity, at economical prices. The authorities know when and how they should protect and nurture units."

One of major components in the manufacture of synthetic detergents is caustic soda, which would be available locally, when the state-owned chloralkali plant commences production at a neighbourhood plot at Ghubrah. The chloralkali unit could also cater to the needs of liquid chlorine.

* * *

WORK has commenced at the Rusayl industrial estate, for the country's first biscuits-manufacturing facility.

Being put up by National Biscuits, a company promoted by the Mustafa and Jawad Group, the

plant is scheduled to commence production in August.

There are scores of brands and qualities in the market, but the Rusayl plant would concentrate on four largely-consumed varieties: glucose, Marie, energy wafers and cheese-based biscuits.

The annual production capacity is to be 1,000 tonnes. A diversification of production range would be thought of at a later stage.

* * *

TALKING of production and protection, Oman's policy is clearcut in this regard: the manufacturing unit has, firstly, to prove its ability to meet the indigenous requirement, both in quality and quantity, at reasonable prices. Then, if there is a genuine threat to the local products because of influx in imported counterparts, there can be an imposition of duty. The extent of duty is decided on individual merit, and normally it can go up to 20 per cent—as in the recent case of cement.

The state-owned Oman Cement Company has been able to produce and market high-quality portland cement, in adequate quantity, at a very reasonable price RO 18 (bulk) and RO 19 (bags) per tonne. The 20 per cent import duty on cement, from March 1, has not caused any surprise, under the circumstances.

PROBLEMS OF OVERSEAS STUDENTS DISCUSSED

Muscat TIMES OF OMAN in English 1 Mar 84 p 3

[Text]

The problems facing Omani students studying abroad, their academic progress and financial matters came under review this week at the national Cultural Attaches' conference which began at the Ministry head office on Saturday.

The 10-day meeting, opened by Yahya Mahfoodh al Mandhri, Minister of Education and Youth Affairs, is being attended by Omani Cultural Attaches posted in Washington, London, Bonn, Cairo, Amman, Morocco, Qatar, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia.

The conference is held every year to review conditions of overseas students and chalk out a plan of action for the future.

One of the main topics reviewed at the meeting is the possibility of revising the amount of scholarship money for overseas students in view of the constant increase in cost of living in their places of stay.

The conference is also being attended by Mr. Moosa Jaffar,

Director-General of Scholarships and Foreign Relations, Mohammad Ilyas, Director of Scholarships and Miss Safia Ghazali, Director of Foreign Relations.

The programme of the Cultural attaches include visits to several secondary schools in the Capital Area and the Interior to have question-and-answer sessions with students preparing for the final secondary examinations.

The Cultural Attaches will apprise students on conditions for obtaining scholarships and a word of advice on their behaviour while they stay abroad. The Ministry has always wanted these students to refrain from being influenced by an alien culture and to project their national customs and traditions.

The schools which the Cultural Attaches will visit include Matanbi Secondary School in Wusta, Ahmed bin Majid School in Sur, Sohar Secondary School, Jamallah Bu Hareed Girls'

Secondary School, Azzan bin Qais Secondary School and Seif bin Sultan School, Doha School of Art, Jabir bin Zaid School, Islamic Secondary School, Teachers Training School, Commercial Secondary School, Abu Obeidah Secondary School and Hafsa bint Omar Girls' Secondary School in Nizwa, and the Agricultural School in Nizwa.

In the Southern Region, the attaches will meet students at Saidia Secondary School, Salalah, and will be received by the Minister of State and Wali of Dhofar on Friday.

On Saturday, the participants will be guests of PDO at a lunch. The conference will end on Sunday with a speech by the Minister of Education and Youth Affairs.

CSO: 4400/196

STUDENTS ACCEPTED AT FOREIGN UNIVERSITIES

Muscat OMAN DAILY OBSERVER in English 6 Mar 84 p 2

[Text]

SENIOR students at The Sultan's School in Seeb have begun receiving acceptances to colleges and universities in Europe and the United States for the autumn term. The earliest acceptance this year was granted on 13 January, by Boston University in Massachusetts.

Other acceptances have been received from the Florida Institute of Technology in Melbourne, Florida; Baylor University in Waco, Texas; the University of Lowell in Lowell, Massachusetts, and Michigan State University in East Lansing.

The Sultan's School, which is a science-oriented college-preparatory school, requires its students to start planning for university entrance as early as the 10th grade (first secondary). Students in the 10th, 11th and 12th grades take the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) in October.

The PSAT, taken by over a million high school students worldwide, measures developed verbal and mathematical reasoning abilities important for academic performance in college.

The test is entirely in English and is the first in a long series of steps eventually leading to college and university study in English-

speaking countries.

Other steps in the process include taking the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), and the College Board Achievement Tests.

The Sultan's School is the official test centre in Oman for these examinations.

Some students also study for the GCE "O" Level examinations under the supervision of the school's "O" Level adviser. Mock "O" Levels are given at the school, with the actual exams being given at the British Council.

Early in their senior year, the students begin sending application forms to the colleges and universities of their choice. Some students apply to as few as three or four different colleges, and some to as many as ten. The acceptances usually begin arriving in March, well before the students graduate. The six acceptances received so far this year are earlier than normal.

"These early acceptances indicate that our senior students are applying to colleges earlier than ever," according to headmaster John Chalfant. "But, more importantly, they suggest that the quality of our academic programme is becoming more widely recognised abroad. We're quite pleased that some good universities are showing a willingness to accept our students in the middle of their last year of secondary school."

Most of the 43 graduates of The Sultan's School are attending universities or doing the GCE "A" Levels. Five are studying in Arab universities, nine are in the United Kingdom, 20 are in the United States, and the rest are scattered from France to the Philippines, and places in between.

A majority of the school's graduates have gone directly into regular university academic programmes without having to do "Prep" courses.

EXPANSION OF HEALTH PROGRAMS PLANNED

Muscat TIMES OF OMAN in English 8 Mar 84 pp 1, 3

[Article by Muzaffar Muhammad]

[Text]

There new medical units are to open in Oman this year — part of a multi-million Rial health expansion programme for the country.

A cardiac unit, gastro-enterology department and a pathology unit are almost ready for opening in the Capital area, according to Dr. M.S.K. Mugheri, Director of Curative Services.

He also revealed that a psychiatric hospital, three health centres, two new general hospitals for the Interior and a number of extensions were almost complete.

The chief of the Cardiac Unit had been sent to Glasgow University, Scotland, to gain more experience in diagnosis, management and treatment, while the new department was set up at Al Nadha Hospital.

It was being equipped with the latest echo-cardiograph machine, Dr Mugheri said.

The gastro-enterology department is also based, temporarily, at Al Nadha Hospital. A competent physician trained in Germany has established the unit. He performs endoscopies at the hospital and at Khoula and Qaboos Hospital in Salalah.

This was a more efficient method of internal investigation

than radiology and reduced the number of exploratory operations needed, said Dr Mugheri.

The new pathology laboratory is to be at Khoula Hospital and arrangements have been made with Met Path of UK for any pathology work which cannot be done in the Sultanate.

In addition to buying 60 pints of blood each week from America the response from local donors was encouraging. The blood bank had twice as much stock for transfusions as in past years.

Dr. Mugheri said other projects which are being opened shortly include the Psychiatric Hospital at al Hajar, Tanam Hospital extension, Saham and Quryat health centres, and Wadi al Jizzi health centre.

Projects expected to be completed this year include the extension of Buraimi Hospital and Sinaw, Bilad Bani Bu Ali, Bilad Bani Bu Hassan, Haima and Khasab Health Centres.

New facilities to be opened at Khoula Hospital include an Orthopaedic ward of 128 beds, orthopaedic OPD, plastic and burns. OPD, upgrading of the delivery suites and CSSD to meet the needs of the Capital Area. Obstetric and a general purpose ultra-sound machines have been installed.

Elaborating on the improvement of health facilities, the Director said all hospitals in the Sultanate had undergone major changes. More staff were employed and new departments at district hospitals were opened. These new departments include ophthalmology dental dermatology and physiotherapy. Almost all the district hospitals from Musandam to Sur have surgeons, physicians, paediatricians, obstetricians, ophthalmologists, anaesthetists and dental surgeons. The number of general duty medical officers has also increased. In many of the medical officers has also increased.

Dr. Mugheri said there was a plan to build a 200-bed paediatric hospital at Khoula and a Rural Health Service for Northern Oman to be based at Ibra or Jalan. There are plans to build V.I.P. suites and extend the male Medical ward at Al Nahda

The total number of beds in hospitals and health centres all over Oman is 2043. This include 813 beds in the Capital, Southern Region 300, Sur, Sharqiya and Jalan 312, Oman Interior 190, Al Dhahira 108, Batinah, Rustaq and Quryat 226, North 68 and Masirah 26.

BRIEFS

IMPORTS DOWN--The value of imports to Oman in 1983 registered a decline of R.O. 65 million as compared to the previous year. According to the statistics released by Directorate General of Customs, imports to Oman totalled R.O. 860.9 million in 1983 as compared to R.O. 926.5 million in 1982. Machinery and transport equipment accounted for 46 per cent of the total imports. Food imports formed 12.4 per cent of the total. Japan was on top of the list of exporters--pouring goods into Oman worth R.O. 189.4 million. Britain was second--goods worth R.O. 160.5 million, followed by the UAE worth R.O. 151 million. Import of non-oil goods into Oman amounted to R.O. 120.7 million as compared to R.O. 117.3 million in 1982. [Text] [Muscat TIMES OF OMAN in English 8 Mar 84 p 3]

CSO: 4400/196

PLO FINANCES DISCUSSED

Rome L'ESPRESSO in Italian 29 Jan 84 pp 30-32

[Text] There has often been talk about the financial power of the PLO; however, very little that is accurate is known in the West. Set forth below is a detailed account of the income, funds, property and expenditures of the Palestinian revolution.

Tunis. There is an atmosphere of austerity in the PLO offices. A very recent directive has forced the officials of the organization to give up luxurious automobiles. A commission is at work to review the role, position and income of many bureaucrats who, in the past, have lived a life of luxury. The reason is that, during last year's Israeli invasion of Lebanon, PLO property suffered tremendous losses, not only in armaments, but also in goods and real estate (hospitals, factories, schools, financial institutions, etc.). The battle of Tripoli and the exodus have delivered an additional blow: 30 million dollars (of which 2.5 million paid to charter the five Greek ships) literally went up in smoke. And now it is necessary to provide for the settlement of the fedayeen and their families in foreign lands.

There have been many rumors and they continue, about the fabulous riches that the PLO is alleged to have stashed away in mysterious banks. It is known that during the annual meetings of the Palestinian National Council (the PLO "parliament") many sessions (behind closed doors) are reserved for the intense scrutiny of budgets and accounts that are as complex as the budget of any country. How much money does Arafat really have at his disposal? From where does it come? How is it used? To answer these questions is not easy because the Palestinians having responsibility in the matter do not speak willingly, but careful research reveals that every year the PLO collects 250 million dollars directly. There is also an additional 70 million dollars destined for the Palestinians of the occupied territories (the West Bank and Gaza) that are together administered by the PLO and King Hussein of Jordan as a result of a decision at the Arab summit meeting in Baghdad in 1978.

A large part of these funds comes from contributions by the Arab countries, which each year decide at their meetings on the amount of the "subsidy" for the "Palestinian revolution." The 150 million dollars paid in the past few years are far less than the estimated appropriations because for some time now Lybia, Syria, Iraq and Algeria have not contributed their quotas. The other important

source of income for the PLO comes from the workers who have emigrated to the Persian Gulf countries, who pay a veritable tax (from 5 to 7 percent of their pay) to the host countries, which are then supposed to turn it over to the PLO treasury. However, the payments are not always made on schedule and the PLO officials are forced to wait a long time in order to obtain these funds. Even the Palestinian emigres', scattered between the United States and Europe, South America and Africa, underwrite regular contributions directly to PLO collectors who knock at their doors twice a year. Finally, other funds are supplied by the United Nations through UNRWA (the organization for refugees).

Parallel to this financial flow, the PLO has income that comes from its own investments. These operations are shrouded in absolute secrecy: there has been talk about commissions and kickbacks, but today such reports are as curtly denied in Tunis as they were in Beirut in the past. It is certain, however, that the PLO's finances are managed by two banking institutions. The most important is the Arab bank located in Amman with more than 20 branches in various countries of the world, including the United States. Its president is a Jordanian Palestinian whose name is Abdul Majid Shuman. It is certainly no accident that all PLO accounts are drawn in Jordanian dinars. The other institution is the Arab Bank of Commerce located in Beirut, headed by Burhad Dajani, a member of an influential Palestinian family from the Jerusalem area. Not even the Israelis have been able to penetrate the secrets of these banks during their occupation of Beirut. It was learned, however, that the Arab Bank, through complex financial transactions since 1967 has purchased several parcels of land on the West Bank and in Gaza from landowners who were afraid of expropriation by Israeli authorities. Some of this land was actually confiscated by the Jerusalem government. The day that an agreement is reached, the regular possession of land will constitute an important legal tool for the PLO.

The management of a sizeable portion of this cash is entrusted to the National Palestinian Fund, chaired by an independent, Hanna Nasir, and controlled by the Executive Committee, that is, the PLO government. The National Fund, in addition to taking care of the social aspects (provides for the families of those killed, the orphans and the disabled), directs a veritable financial trust: the SAMED. Founded in Amman in 1970, the SAMED was later moved to Lebanon. Its activity, however, was expanded, especially after 1976, when, because of the Lebanese civil war, a large number of Palestinians lost their jobs. Prior to the Israeli invasion of 1982, it controlled 40 small and medium-sized factories, with a staff of 5,500 workers, which produced furniture and textiles mainly. In addition, through a number of cooperatives, in order to eliminate the added costs of the middleman, it had control of the distribution of foodstuffs destined for the refugee camps. A welfare state structure or, as its officials are fond of saying, "the embryo of the future public intervention sector of the Palestinian state." These factories are not in existence today, having crumbled under the Israeli bombings. By now, because the Palestinians have learned that sooner or later they will be thrown out of the countries that give them hospitality, the SAMED has seen to it that large sums of money have been invested in other countries by buying land in Africa, which is used for profitable agricultural enterprises.

All this money is used for military training, weapons and ammunition as well as for diplomatic representations. One hundred five countries recognize the PLO and in 85 of them there are offices with diplomatic status. The PLO provides for

office expenses and the salaries of the personnel. A diplomat earns between 1,000 and 3,000 dollars depending on the country. Then, there is multitude of bureaucrats who take care of seven departments (political, education, health, information and propaganda, treasury, occupied territories and defense).

In Beirut, where, until the Israeli invasion, practically the entire state and bureaucratic structure of the PLO was concentrated, a department head earned a salary of 450 dollars a month, while a mere employee earned 85 dollars. To this amount, family allotments of 30 dollars for the wife and 10 dollars for each child were added. Today, in Tunis, salaries are more or less the same. There is an established rule that one-half of the salary is paid in dollars and the other half in the currency of the host country.

The men of the regular army (the Palestinian Liberation Army, 4,000 men stationed in Syria, Egypt and Jordan) receive pay equal to that of the soldiers of the host country. The fedayeen, who belong to the various resistance organizations, receive different treatment: those of Al Fatah, for instance, receive a base pay ranging from 350 dollars for a private soldier to 1,300 for a colonel.

In addition, to the official PLO treasuries, there are the funds that the various resistance movements have at their disposal. It is rumored that last year, the Ahmed Jibril group received 40 million dollars from Qadhdhafi in exchange for a pledge to oppose Arafat. The contributions from Tripoli dribble in every month and, at times, they are withheld if the directives are not faithfully observed. The Damascus government, in addition to financing the Sa'igah, a direct offshoot of the Ba'ath ruling party in Syria, gives logistical support to the groups that are "faithful" to its policy. However, many of these attempt to become independent, at least on a financial level. This is the case of George Habash's Popular Front, which manages chains of Chinese restaurants in the United States (where it has sometimes clashed with powerful crime syndicates of other ethnic origins) and in Egypt. However, there is not a single group that does not have its financial operation; the Ahmed Jibril group owns a transportation company, the "Frozen," very well known in the Middle East. The Sa'igah controls a large part of the oriental rug market.

These are profitable activities, but their income is peanuts compared to the "treasure" of the PLO controlled by Arafat. Perhaps those, who say that one of the objectives of the dissidents during the battle of Tripoli was actually the capture of the PLO coffers, were not wrong.

9731
CSO: 3528/65

QAFCO SHOWS RECORD PERFORMANCE IN 1983

Doha GULF TIMES in English 26, 27 Jan 84 p 1

[Article by T. M. Anantharman]

[Text]

THE Qatar Fertiliser Company (Qafco) has turned in a record performance during 1983 to show an operating profit of QR120m for the year accounting for 25% of the turnover, despite severe recession in many countries.

Qafco's Managing Director Mr Ingulf Skogestad yesterday disclosed that ammonia production totalled 586,000 tonnes which was up by 58,000 tonnes over 1982. Urea production was also a record at 685,000 tonnes which, about 23,000 tonnes more than the previous year.

Operating profit at QR120m for 1983 is down by QR18m compared with that of 1982, reflecting lower fertiliser prices in 1983.

Urea exports were a record 717,000 tonnes during 1983, up by 97,790 tonnes over that of 1982. Similarly ammonia exports totalled 164,000 tonnes, an increase of about 19,000 tonnes over that of 1982.

China is the biggest customer for Qafco's urea having bought some 33% followed by the Philippines and India.

For ammonia, India is the main customer buying 58% of Qafco exports.

Skogestad said the company pursued a policy of cutting pro-

duction costs and improving operating efficiency. This has led to increased production, improved energy use, better urea quality and staff cutbacks.

Manpower during 1983 was cut by 10%. The managing director said the company now employed 900 people. Over the next two years, another 50 or so jobs are likely to be axed.

He said the company was currently implementing in phases the new instrumentation control system. The QR7.5m

system is to become fully operational by 1985.

Skogestad denied that Qafco is raising money on the Euro-dollar market. "We are not raising any loans at all. In fact we have started paying back the government loan as of this year." He added that the company was financially quite sound although 1983 "was the worst year we could think of."

He said during the last few months fertiliser prices had started looking up and he hoped the market would improve, although he could not say to what extent.

CSO: 4400/200

ENGINEER DISCUSSES 1984 PROJECT COMPLETION

Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 13 Feb 84 p 1

[Article by R. Mohan]

[Text]

DOHA — Among the major projects Qatar plans to complete this year are an air base, a naval base, a central prison and a 300-bed women's hospital, apart from completing the corniche. Smaller projects include building 11 schools, several police stations and housing, according to Mr Khaled Al Khater, Director of Engineering, Ministry of Public Works.

Appearing on the TV programme "Be My Guest," Mr Khater said, however, that there was a general slowdown in new projects. He described it as good for the country and a time to pause and think. He said his department had laid off 1,166 personnel because of the slowdown. They included 1,000 employed on a temporary basis. If the work load were to increase, the department could hire staff again, he added. The Public Works Ministry accounts for 50 per cent of the state budget.

He said the Engineering Services Department (ESD) had just completed the second phase of the Sewage Treatment Plant and it was expected that effluent, after tertiary treatment, would start flowing within a month. The ESD also plans to build another sewage treatment plant towards the west of the city. Some 40 per cent of Doha is already connected to the sewage system. Work is on in other areas

to connect them to the plant, particularly in Madinat Khalifa.

Mr Khater said the job that remained to be done on the corniche was from Doha Port to Doha Club. Other jobs which needed to be taken up as early as possible were underpasses at three roundabouts with dense traffic—Ramada, Mannai and Airport.

He agreed that roads needed to be improved. The ESD had taken up the job according to a set programme three years ago and it was under this scheme that four ring roads had been all but completed. "It has also been luckily possible for us to finish work on roads like Hamad. The next to be taken up will be major roads that connect the ring roads. The smaller roads will come next."

Defending the resort to roundabouts rather than traffic lights, Mr Khater said it was not always a good idea to install traffic lights. He cited the case of West Bay, where traffic is not heavy. Drivers there took their chance and cut red signals, under the impression that the lane would always be empty. The result was a high incidence of fatal accidents on that particular intersection.

Mr Khater, who is also a member of the housing committee, said efforts were being made to spread out housing colonies toward outlying areas like Khor, Al Ruweis and Wakra. But the pressure was on Doha city. Some 1,000 houses were being built every year.

PHONE COMPANY REDUCES INSTALLATION TIME

Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 15 Feb 84 p 4

[Text]

DOHA—From 1000 to 1,200 new lines are being provided every month in Qatar's telephone expansion programme and the number of those waiting for a connection has been reduced to only a couple of thousands, according to a spokesman of the Qatar National Telephone Service (QNTS).

Talking to Khaleej Times yesterday, the spokesman said there were some 61,000 telephone lines in Qatar today and the government had so far spent 340 million Qatari riyals in its five-year expansion scheme launched in 1981. In the next financial year that begins in April the QNTS plans to invest 108 million riyals out of this scheme. The expenditure depends on budgetary approval from the government.

The spokesman said two digital telephone exchanges had been installed. The second of these has just been completed. A third is to be built in Khalifa Town. Tenders are being evaluated and a contract is to be signed in the near future for the exchange building.

The digital system provides for greater clarity, speed and ease of transmission. Besides, Qatar has also adopted the Pulse Code Modulation system according to international standards. The spokesman said the standard of services now available in Qatar was on par with the best in the world. Direct dialling service is now available to 134 countries. Qatar has the capacity to link up with the few left, if the others have the technical equipment.

Over 80 per cent of the telephone network now in Qatar is on digital system. Underground cables cover all but a few remote rural areas where it is more economical to have overhead lines.

The spokesman said the aim of the QNTS was to reduce the waiting period for a new connection to two weeks. Currently it takes longer than that, mainly because of the difficulty and delay in laying underground ducts. The capacity of these cables has increased recently and the QNTS expects the handful of small areas within the city not yet covered to be given new connections shortly.

There are 1,300 car telephones in Qatar and there is no waiting list.

CSO: 4400/202

BRIEFS

UMM SA'ID OIL REFINERY--DOHA--The Qatari Minister of Finance and Petroleum Affairs, Shaikh Abdul Aziz bin Khalifa Al Thani, yesterday declared open a 50,000 barrels per day refinery at Umm Said. A large number of senior officials, diplomats and other guests attended the function which was held to mark the 12th anniversary of the accession of His Highness the Amir of Qatar, Shaikh Khalifa Bin Hamad Al Thani. The new refinery is located in the industrial area of Umm Said adjacent to the first refinery which has a capacity of 12,000 bpd. Both the refineries are being operated as a single unit through one single control room thus saving on maintenance and production costs. With the commissioning of the new refinery the combined production capacity is now 62,000 bpd. QNA adds: The refinery owned by the state oil company Qatar General Petroleum Corporation and operated by the National Oil Distribution Company, has been operating since October last. Since the refinery opened Qatar has ceased imports of petroleum products this year and is currently preparing for exports of petroleum products from a terminal at Umm Said to add to downstream value added revenues from oil. The new refining capacity is expected to meet demand in Qatar at least until the end of the century with exports decreasing gradually in line with growing domestic demand, which totalled 525,000 tonnes in 1983. [Text] [Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 23 Feb 84 p 1]

CSO: 4400/204

HAMA RECONSTRUCTION STILL INCOMPLETE

Amman THE JERUSALEM STAR in English 16-22 Feb 84 p 10

[Text]

DAMASCUS — Entering from the Damascus road, one at first sees little of the horror that struck Hama in February 1982. People are thronging the streets as before. The cars are mud encrusted as before, the shops are buzzing with human-kind as before, the old men are sitting around drinking coffee and hot tea as before.

But the walls lining the major road from the centre of town, leading in the direction of Aleppo are new. And the slogans are freshly painted: "long live President Hafiz Al-Assad, the hero of October. The youths of the Ba'ath Party greet President Al-Assad and hail his struggle against Zionism and Imperialism "Revolutionary Syria will not fall on its knees". The walls are of thick concrete blocks. One gets the prevent trespassing but to discourage viewing what is behind them, for indeed they are taller than eye level. And though crowds are walking alongside them, whether from apathy, sadness or fear, no one appears to be straining to see over them.

At first glance what is viewed could be a scene lifted from West Beirut: Shells of buildings, walls bare of all but in common-place small-arms-to-mortar holes. Bulldozed lots dotted with patches of weeds and occasional bits of rubbish. But unlike in Beirut, the children are not playing on that side of the wall and the adults do not walk there. And no one wants to answer questions. It is like it never happened until you look.

The old city is gone. An eerie, peculiar, haunting kind of urban renewal has taken place. In fact, there are already many new buildings replacing those that were destroyed. The water wheels are still in place and are still turning. But, whereas in the past the sound of the water slushing over the wheels was both blended with and absorbed by the centuries-old houses in the

core of the ancient city, now the water makes a hollow echo in the emptiness created by the impersonal concrete slab structures. Picturesque Hama as depicted on Syrian post cards has been replaced by just another desert city rising from the dust-today-mud-tomorrow.

Citizens and even news reporters differ in their estimates of how many Hama residents lost their lives two years ago. High figures are 22,000 but most inhabitants place the number at 15,000.

A Middle East scholar in Damascus who asks to remain anonymous recalls it this way. The Muslim brothers, long thought to be massed in Hama for months prior to that fateful February had been successfully assassinating various activists of the Ba'ath Party as well as other high-placed alawites. When the government of President Assad decided to eradicate the seat of the Muslim brothers organization, young and rather inexperienced brothers sincerely thought their allies in Aleppo, Tripoli, Homs and finally Damascus would rise simultaneously both in their respective cities and in alliance with Hama.

Meanwhile brothers went from door-to-door throughout Hama assuring the time had come to overthrow the Assad government and that furthermore the brothers had both the popular support and the physical wherewithal to accomplish this. Additionally, they offered the older residents

provisions, actually going to-and-from homes and stores, securing and delivering the purchases.

Such services were not offered long. Whether the brothers realized their error in judgment will never be known as most of those who were in Hama among the estimated 15,000 : dead. Government troops hit with a force and planning that comes only with professional timing and experience. They surrounded Hama from TB centre to the north, using munitions that would laugh at small arms, had it the ability. Incredulous residents had little time to evacuate. Perhaps they still had faith in the brothers. So men, women and children were killed in the indiscriminate shelling and street fighting. Reportedly, many people, especially young men, were subjected to mass executions.

The scholar feels the Muslim brothers organization was exterminated also, and that chances for its revival to a pre-February, 1982 strength is quite slim. Yet one remembers that Syrians still speak of Hama as the lead city in purging the country of the French occupation in May 1945. And knowing the regions reputation for tensions one wonders how long they will remember its uprising and subsequent slaughter. The orantes still flows through Hama. The water wheels still turn. But Hama is very quiet, two years after.

CSO: 4400/203

DUBAYY SEES OPPORTUNITY IN IRAN-JAPAN TRADE SITUATION

Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 9 Feb 84 p 1

[Text]

IRAN'S decision to stop issuing letters of credit for direct imports from Japan may prove to be a shot in the arm for re-exporters in Dubai, business sources said yesterday.

Iranian and other bankers said letters of credit for purchases from Dubai were being opened as usual. Until late yesterday, Iranian bankers had received no instructions to the contrary from Teheran and they speculated that the restrictions might apply only to direct imports from Japan.

Business sources said even if business through letters of credit were to be stopped, re-exports from Dubai to Iran would not come to a halt unlike in the case of Japan where exporting companies insist on irrevocable banking documents.

Much of the business to Iran from

Dubai is transacted against cash and in recent months there has been an increase in barter trade.

As a result of Iran's policy of importing directly from producing countries, there has been an increase in Iran-Japanese trade in recent months.

But with direct imports from Japan coming to a halt as a result of the new restriction, re-exporters in Dubai may find it easier to send more goods across the Gulf.

The revised policy on items that non-resident Iranians in the Gulf are allowed to take into their country was also expected to increase re-exports, but enquiries yesterday revealed that such expectations had failed to materialise.

Although the new policy has been notified, the Iranian mission has not started endorsing passports for this purpose. It is expected to start doing so in a few days.

CSO: 4400/201

UAE TO BEGIN EXPORTING FERTILIZER TO INDIA

Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 10 Feb 84 p 11

[Article by Ahmed Hassan]

[Text]

THE UAE will become an exporter of fertilisers in the next few days when the first Indian vessel docks at the special port of Ruwais to carry urea to India.

Ammonia from the fertil plant at Ruwais will be exported under a seven-year contract signed by the Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation of India and the UAE. The contract is being regarded, as testimony of confidence in the capacity of the UAE to provide urea and ammonia to meet the rising requirements of fertilisers in many Third World countries.

Informed sources here told Khaleej Times, that the agreement signed by the Indian corporation with Adnoc (Fertil is 66.66 per cent Adnoc-owned and 33.33 per cent shares belong to a French company) will ship 175,000 tons of ammonia and urea annually. The exports could be increased by another 50,000 tons, if required.

The ammonia plant at Ruwais is to produce 1,000 tons per day while the urea plant is expected to account for 1,500 tons daily. A special conveyor belt system has been installed to ensure speedy delivery of urea to tankers.

The work on the project began in 1980 and utilises natural gas from the

BAB, Bu Hasa and Asab fields. The hydrogen for ammonia making is obtained from the natural gas after treatment and is compressed with nitrogen to produce liquid ammonia at almost 23 degrees and is then transported to the urea plant at the rate of 40 tons per hour.

The liquid ammonia is, in turn, treated with carbon dioxide and further with chemicals to produce urea.

It is, however, interesting to note that India, which has more than 20 fertiliser plants itself, has been importing urea from several countries. Among the largest exporters to India is Saudi Arabia. Kuwait has been India's regular supplier of sulphur. Sources indicated that the UAE would be one of the most potential suppliers of fertilisers to India since its full requirements might not be met for quite some time from its own plants.

The UAE is also providing India with a considerable amount of cement. Private vessels are known to have offloaded substantial amount of UAE cement in Bombay.

With the forming of the new 'cement group' in the country, the prices are being kept under check. It is well known that currently Indian production of cement is nearly 26 million tons, while meets only half of its requirements.

CSO: 4400/201

GULF OFFSHORE STARTS SALEH FIELD PRODUCTION

Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 16 Jan 84 p 1

[Text]

GULF Offshore Ras Al Khaimah Petroleum Limited, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Gulf Oil Corporation, announced yesterday that production has begun from the Saleh field. The field is located 26 miles off Ras Al Khaimah in 320 feet of water.

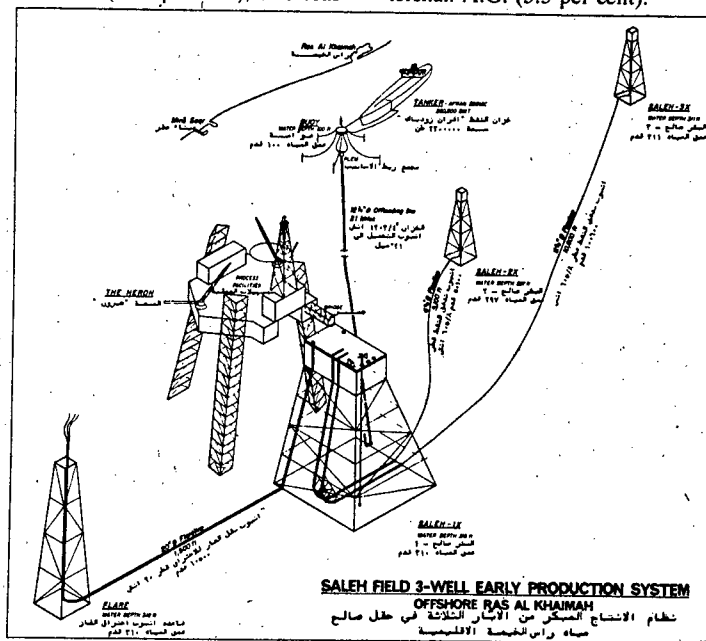
Initial production commenced on January 3, and is currently flowing at a rate of 5,000 barrels of oil per day. From the discovery of the Saleh 1X Well on February 7, 1983 to the date of first production, development has been completed in less than one year.

The development consists of a three-well early production system and an associated moored storage tanker. Completion of the Saleh 2X Well is under way at present.

Gulf Offshore Ras Al Khaimah Limited is the operator of the concession held jointly by Ras Al Khaimah National Oil Company (50 per cent), Gulf Offshore Ras

Al Khaimah Limited (25.23 per cent), International Petroleum Limited (8.66 per cent), Overseas

Petroleum and Investment Corporation (10.61 per cent) and Wintershall A.G. (5.5 per cent).



CSO: 4400/198

NATURAL GAS 1983 OUTPUT 8.3 BILLION CUBIC METERS PER DAY

Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 26 Jan 84 p 14

[Text]

PRODUCTION of natural gas in the UAE last year, maintained a rate of 8.3 billion cubic metres a day.

Although, the average production rate maintained last year is 1.7 billion cubic metres, less than the average rate of production reached the year before; it is believed, that the figure showed the remarkable development, accomplished by the country in the field of gas and oil production, when the international market trends have been adverse.

Informed sources have disclosed, that the profits made by the country through its sale of crude last year accounted for 16 billion dollars. Three years ago, when the Opec production ceiling did not apply, the country's income stood at 19.5 billion dollars annually. It would be recalled, that the UAE oil minister had repeatedly referred to the sacrifices being made by the country to preserve unity in the 13 member organisation, which on the whole is losing nearly 80 billion dollars annually.

It is estimated, that Opec, which had an income of 275 billion dollars annually three years ago, is now earning about 195 billion dollars. It is also understood that the average production rate of Opec currently stands at 18.3 million barrels of crude oil a day, as compared to 19 million barrels per day earlier.

However, sources point out, that the organisation vastly improved its capacity to refine its own oil. According to surveys, carried out recently,

the average capacity of member states to refine their own oil is estimated to be 5.4 million barrels of oil a day. This figure, is expected to rise substantially when some of the refineries in the member states start producing at full capacity.

With regard to the overall production rates in the UAE, it has been indicated, that from 1975 onwards the average rate of production in the country was 1.6 million barrels of crude daily. It increased substantially in 1977, when the average shot up to 1.9 million barrels. After 1980 before Opec production ceiling was introduced, the production, stood at 1.24 million barrels a day. After the London agreement, on maintaining production levels, the average production of UAE stands at 1.1 million barrels a day.

Sources estimate, that the average earnings of Opec states are likely to suffer another setback this year, and the income of the member states might only account for 154 billion dollars which means that the losses would be in the range of 40 to 45 per cent from the revenue generated in 1980.

It is also significant to note, that the overall loss in the oil revenue of the UAE, has reduced, due to the gains acquired with the sale of liquid natural gas, and liquid petroleum gas. However, it is also to be noted that a substantial increase has been registered in the domestic consumption, both with regard to refined oil and the LNG as fuel. With the discovery of new fields in the country, it is also expected that in the current year, the overall losses will be offset, with exports from new fields.

BUSINESSMAN COMMENTS ON 'SEMI-RECESSION'

Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 7 Feb 84 p 13

[Article by Dara Kadva]

[Text]

A LEADING businessman of the UAE feels that the ups and downs in the production and price of oil need not affect the local economy and should not lead to a stoppage of local development or create desperate conditions.

"Although oil is a major factor and 95 per cent of our economy depends on it, the trouble has been with our eagerness to spend every fil we receive in income. We have been unable to limit our spending and retain a surplus for use whenever a gap occurs between income and expenditure," said Mr Mohammad A. Al Fahim, managing director of Al Fahim Group of companies, one of the oldest and the largest trading groups in the UAE.

"The present situation requires of us to be content with lesser income and work within our means. Conversely, it has also forced a sense of planning, foresight and good management. It is unfortunate but true that our people and government only work and manage by crisis," Mr Fahim added in an interview with Khaleej Times.

Unfortunately, there is nothing that the business community can do to try to change the policies and procedures of the government and speed up the finalisation of the budget or payments to the companies or salaries to the staff, he said, and stressed that the delay is not intentional.

The country is going through a period of semi-recession presently, Mr Fahim said. It is a time for rearranging priorities and consolidation of management so that the situation can be improved.

"We are not having this 'semi-

recession' for the first time," he observed. "We had it in 1969 for a two-year period till 1971, and again in 1977 till 1979. So, the slowdown in government spending and business activity is not new to us and we are accustomed to it by now. The third semi-recession had been in fact foreseen by some as much as a year earlier and had taken precautions. But those who were unaware and were not used to the conditions in the UAE, like the newcomers, were badly hit."

But he also said the situation is not alarming and there is no need for desperation.

The reason for the semi-recession this time is the same which caused it twice before, i.e. the government withholding budget and spending less than it normally plans for. "Our welfare state depends on government spending, through the business community, to the citizen. So, whenever there is a shortcoming on the part of the government, business is automatically affected," he said.

But his own experience was that the government had improved during the last decade, which has made the crisis periods shorter and less harmful to the business community.

He was asked how a delay of upto eight months in the finalisation of the federal budget and a delay in the payment of salaries by a month or two cannot be called desperate. He replied: "we are not the first country to overspend and we may not even be the last. My estimate is that we have expanded much beyond our limits and capabilities. We now need to cut our costs and stretch our means, and contribute in our own way to create conditions in which the budget can be approved in time and there is more liquidity available in the market. The

present conditions are not permanent and the economy is bound to improve with all-round measures," Mr Fahim said.

"I would not mind admitting that we really needed this present period of semi-recession," he continued. "Inflation and prices were going out of all proportions and had we continued at that rate for another two to three years, there would have been a lot more harm done to business than it is today."

"Take the example of the rents alone. They are more realistic today than they were two years ago, having dropped by about 50 per cent in Abu Dhabi," Mr Fahim added. "It is the same thing with the cost of other allied services and utilities. The situation had reached an extent where it was unnatural and also unhealthy."

Asked if the recent trend of retrenching and non-hiring new staff in government, oil companies and other bulk manpower sectors was the right way of approaching the crisis, Mr Fahim said, "it is necessary to take remedial measures quickly and in the shortest possible time." He thought the government ought to have stopped redundant manpower recruitment much earlier.

"And when the crisis approached, the government's intention to reduce inflation was not matched by the adoption of right procedures."

"But I am glad they are doing something even belatedly to stabilise the situation," Mr Fahim said. "We in the business community do advise our friends in the government through various channels available at our disposal, like the chamber of commerce and industry. We answer all governmental queries and give them our opinions."

The business community in its own way is now re-arranging its finances, reducing overheads where possible, not ordering large stocks unless there is a definite market, controlling inventory, and not entering into large tenders for supply or services to govern-

ment departments unless it is absolutely profitable to do so because the government is now more strict on specifications and terms of contract.

Asked if the present situation was unique to Abu Dhabi only or to the UAE as a whole, Mr Fahim said Abu Dhabi of course was a trend-setter by virtue of its being the big spender in the UAE.

"Economic growth here, or recession, affects the emirates too. But I am confident that the conditions will improve for the better by the end of the year," he added.

Replying to another question, Mr Fahim said such a situation could recur after few years if national rules and regulations, which are fundamental to the wellbeing, harmony and usefulness of the business community, are not formed quickly. "It is natural that, if we do not have proper federal laws for commercial companies, insurance, shipping, trading, etc, topped by permanent constitution, control over such factors cannot be properly enforced, which lead to the emergence of the recession."

The proposed establishment of the UAE stock exchange will be very helpful "because it will at least provide the business community with something else to do, other than just import goods for sale and projects. It will also increase interest in industrial and services companies and provide the people with a chance to participate in such ventures."

Conditions in the UAE being unique, Mr Fahim did not think that foreign investors would be able to perform here better than UAE nationals themselves. "They may not also have greater means than ourselves," he opined. "This, however, is not the same with regard to Gulf investors who are not regarded as foreign investors. But the Gulf countries are also having the same problems as we do, and I hope that our Gulf brothers can first improve conditions in their own countries before coming here to improve ours."

ADMA-OPCO REPORTS LOWER PRODUCTION IN 1983

Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 16 Feb 84 p 11

[Article by Dara Kadva]

[Text]

ABU Dhabi Marine Operating Company (Adma-Opco) produced and exported less crude oil last year than in 1982 "in response to government policies," although development and expansion continued throughout the company's spheres of operations in the same year.

Total production from its two main fields of Umm Shaif and Zakum averaged about 206,000 barrels per day, which is some 87,000 bpd below the 1982 level, according to the company's "Annual Review of Operations 1983," made available yesterday in advance of its formal release on Saturday next.

The company's total oil production for the year was 75,011,263 barrels, which is a little less than 10 million tonnes, which represented a drop of about 30 per cent over 1982.

However, despite 0.39 million tonnes supplied to the Adnoc refineries for local consumption, crude oil exports during the year were higher in quantity than production, although the exports too were 28 per cent lower than the figure for 1982, it said. Total exports were 78,317,842 barrels, which is about 10.5 million tonnes. This was because of the company's huge storage capacity of about one million tonnes in 12 tanks at both the fields.

The average production rate for each field was 133,599 bpd for Umm Shaif and 71,912 for Zakum.

In exports, as in the past years, Japan continued to top the list by buying almost six million tonnes (almost 60 per cent) of the company's production. Western Europe, excluding Bri-

tain and France, bought 1.49 million tonnes, while the Far East, India, France, South America, African countries and Britain, in that order, bought the remainder of the production.

Adma-Opco is 60 per cent owned by Adnoc, while BP, CFP and Jodco jointly own the remaining 40 per cent. The annual review repeatedly stressed that it follows a production policy, which is laid down by the government, and at the same time gave extensive details of its drilling and exploration activities.

At the end of 1983, Adma-Opco had 2,829 employees, down from 2,988 at the end of 1982, a decrease of 5.3 per cent. UAE nationals were 363, of whom 40 are occupying senior positions. The company has 163 national trainees, of whom 134 are studying in Britain, it said. Arab staff of the company totalled 1,802, which is 63 per cent of the entire workforce.

The company's Implementing Agreement was signed in 1977 between Adnoc and the other partners in the concession. Since then, the cumulative exports from its two fields reached the billionth barrel mark in 1983.

In the offshore area, a contract of more than 400 million dollars was signed with a local company for the installation of jackets and pipelines in Umm Shaif and Zakum. This was the first major project to be directly managed by Adma-Opco, it said.

In drilling, the 1983 footage was a new record which greatly surpassed the peak reached six years ago. Coming close to 600,000 feet, the year's footage registered an increase of 25 per cent over the previous record of 452,886 feet drilled in 1977. It was also an improvement of some 160,000

feet (39 per cent) over the footage drilled in 1982. The year also saw a record in vertical drilling when a well was drilled to 17,600 feet in 141 days. Nine exploration wells were drilled in 1983, after a seismic survey covering 2,256 line kilometres in two zones of the concession area.

During the year, a new 200,000 bpd water injection platform, a 39 megawatt power generation platform and a 136-man accommodation and control platform at Zakum central supercomplex were commissioned. In Umm Shaif supercomplex, a 78-man extension to the original accommodation platform was also commissioned in 1983.

A total of 135 tankers were loaded at the Das Island terminal, of whom the largest load was 257,284 tonnes. A total of 164,165 tonnes of bunkering fuel was supplied to 61 ships.

The review also mentioned the company's expansion of its services in the technical, telecommunications, computer, safety, medical, and other general fields, and made a detailed mention of the formal opening of the Das Island Hospital, which was inau-

gurated during the year by the Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources, Dr Mana Al Oteiba. The 24-bed single-storey hospital has four consulting rooms, a dental clinic, a decompression room, a dispensary, a pathology lab and an X-ray room. It serves a Das population of about 5,000.

The company's local purchases during the year amounted to about 2,050 million dirhams, which was 276 million more than the 1982 level.

However, unlike in the past, the 1983 annual review carried no forward by either the chairman, Shaikh Tahnoun bin Mohammed, or the general manager, Mr Georges Manasterski. But there was a note and a picture of a visit to the Adma-Opco Head Office by Shaikh Tahnoun last summer.

The review recorded the Adma-Opco management's appreciation of the cooperation and the help received throughout 1983 from the government of the President, His Highness Shaikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan and particularly the Department of Petroleum in Abu Dhabi.

CSO: 4400/203

NATIONAL PORTS SEE GOOD POTENTIAL FOR 1984

Dubayy KHALEEL TIMES in English 23 Jan 84 p 13

[Article: "Port Trends"]

[Text]

PORTS, it appears, have emerged unscathed from recession and have shown handsome gains that have rivalled expectations in some cases. Three ports' working results have been released so far but the performance of others are also believed to be encouraging considering the general state of business in the region.

Dubai ports, Rashid and Jebel Ali, have continued to retain their dominant position with a share around 80 per cent of the Emirates' import. Both the ports have had excellent working results, particularly container trade.

Jebel Ali figures, which were released yesterday, have moved well into the six figure bracket in terms of total Teus. This was due to the fact that some 20,000 tonnes of aluminium ingots were containerised last year.

It is this industrial angle which gives Jebel Ali its strength. The port's industrial zone has 23 firms and they are there on long-term contracts. This makes Jebel Ali not so vulnerable to the ups and downs of political and economic factors elsewhere.

It was the industrial support that also pushed up general cargo figures for Jebel Ali. The opening of International Bagging Corporation is a case in point. It has lifted the cargo level by 22 per cent from September when it was down by 10

per cent. The opening of the cold store had a similar impact, by attracting the Lauritzen reefer service (it had discontinued the service to the Gulf earlier). Again the close links of the port with the off-shore industry proved a considerable blessing both in terms of cargo handled and vessels' turnaround.

The ports have also done well in the transshipment sector of business. The subcontinent ports of Bombay, Karachi and Colombo are the major destinations and origins of cargo in this sector as more and more lines are deploying larger vessels calling only at fewer ports. Africa is also opening up as a viable transshipment cargo point.

But 1984 is considered generally crucial for business and ports are no exception. Results bettered expectations last year for reasons such as on-going projects. The major projects are to be completed during the first two quarters of the year and thereby will obviate any need for further import for them. This is particularly true of Jebel Ali.

The possibilities of new lines—Evergreen, SNSC and United States Lines—entering the Gulf trade are strong. But the rise in business as a result could be depressed by a reduction in service by some major lines which are working on a rationalisation programme for their container trade. Considering that they are moving some 85 per cent of the Gulf trade from the West, these lines' attempt to optimise the trade and cut out duplicated

port calls can curtail the container traffic. At least one ship is expected to be pulled out and two per cent of the slot capacity to be sacrificed under the programme which is eventually expected also to lead to revenue sharing. This move is an immediate response to the withdrawal of Hellenic and Manta Lines and is further designed to lift the sagging freight rates probably by 30 per cent from Europe. The disappearance of the Hellenic's share of some 26,000 Teus will further aid the firmness in freight rates. Similar increases, though less steep, are expected to take place some time next month from the Far East (12 per cent) and the US (five per cent).

But Dubai ports are likely to retain their share despite strong competition from other Gulf ports. There is always the potential threat of eastern ports attracting a line or two away. If this has not happened in spite of their strategic locations it is because they are not very close to the main consuming centres with excellent ports. Lines calling at these ports will have to further offer feeder or trucking services for customers in the southern emirates.

Besides ports of Dubai are highly competitive with port tariffs falling in inverse proportion to the cargo volume. But some shift could take place sooner or later in view of the development plans for those emirates.

JABAL 'ALI INCREASES TONNAGE 22 PERCENT IN 1983

Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 23 Jan 84 p 11

[Text]

THE year 1983 proved to be another record breaking period for the Port Authority of Jebel Ali, says a Press release.

Leases were signed with 11 companies for land sites within the industrial zone bringing the total industrial tenants based at Jebel Ali to 23. Several additional leases are expected within the first quarter of 1984.

Port statistics for the year were good. Mr Charles Heath, marketing director said the overall port throughput showed a 22 per cent gain over

cargo was 10 per cent below the previous year, the fourth quarter saw the opening of international bagging corporation and their throughput enabled the port to end 1983 at 12 per cent higher than 1982.

Mr Heath said: "One of the most exciting and challenging developments in 1983 was the opening of the new cold store, the largest in the UAE and the only one certified by Lloyd's. During the first six months of operating the cold store handled 19,821 tons of reefer cargo." Petroleum products increased 13 per cent over 1982 with 1,314,624 tons moving in 1983 com-

Jebel Ali continued to improve it's container handling throughout as shown below:

	1982	1983	Change
Total TEUs	102,304	124,569	+ 22 pct
Restows	7,356	8,087	+ 10 Pct
Unit moves	72,248	96,280	+ 33 pct
DWT in containers	608,834	957,760	+ 57 pct

1982, with total tonnage in 1983 at 3,275,460 tons compared to 2,676,174 tons in 1982. This represents about 36 per cent of all Dubai cargo moving through Jebel Ali and Port Rashid.

Jebel Ali proved to be the largest container export port in the UAE in 1983, exporting 10,030 TEU's, a 34 per cent increase over the previous year. Transshipment TEU's rose 103 per cent over 1982.

Total general cargo rose nine per cent from 905,747 tons in 1982 to 983,255 tons in 1983. Even though at the end of the third quarter 1983 bulk

pared to 1,161,593 tons in 1982.

Total for vessels in 1983 was 2,720 as against 2,026 in 1982, an overall 34 per cent gain. Supply vessels and work boats increased 54 per cent over 1982 which indicates Jebel Ali's continued growth in the offshore industry with Dubai Petroleum Company, Dugas, Arco, and Sedco Dubai, all operating from the port.

Expansion plans are well underway in Jebel Ali's container section with the order for a third container gantry crane due to be operational in August 1984, as well as additional yard handling equipment also ordered.

FOOD PRICES RISE, SHORTAGES INCREASE

Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 6 Feb 84 p 1

[Article by K. P. Nayar]

[Text]

FOODSTUFF prices in Dubai have risen sharply upsetting a market that has remained stable for over a year. Combined with the rise in prices is a shortage of certain items brought about by developments in the international market.

The price increase has brought little gain for Dubai's foodstuff merchants who continue to complain of declining profits on account of fierce competition.

Importers and wholesalers said that among the items which will be seriously affected by the price rise was vegetable oil, an item that is in wide daily use.

Vegetable oil imported from Singapore was priced at Dh 33 for a 15 kg tin two months ago, but yesterday it was selling in the local market at Dh 68, an increase of more than 100 per cent.

Simultaneously, ghee and American corn oil—a more expensive and better rated items—have also become dearer.

Dutch eggs, priced at Dh 105 for a case of 30 dozen in the wholesale market at the beginning of the year now cost Dh 170. The bulk of local demand is met by supplies from abroad, primarily from Holland.

Simultaneously, some local producers have also put up their retail prices, although only by about 15 per cent.

utes in the Philippines and Thailand and disruption of supplies from the United States and Hawaii. Canned fruit cocktails are also in short supply leading to a spurt in prices.

Following imbalances in the international tea trade, tea prices rose recently by 10 to 12 per cent in Dubai. Now coffee prices have also gone up by about five per cent, as a result of developments in the world market.

Mr Sunder Mans, general manager of K.M. Brothers, importers, wholesalers and retailers of foodstuff, said that for the consumer, these increases have come after a long spell of falling prices.

He said the higher prices would bring little benefit to the merchants. "Profits in the wholesale business have declined from about 25 per cent to between five and seven per cent." He attributed the decline to fierce local competition.

Mr Vijay Vaswani, commercial manager of Gulf Trading and Refrigerating, shared the same view. "The mark up is only between three and 25 per cent. It is around three per cent on most items but in a few cases it is about 25 per cent."

Other Gulf countries, most of which are importers of a wide variety of food items have also been affected by the price increase.

Consequently, the Beirut-based General Union of Arab Chambers of Commerce and Industry, which groups chambers in the entire Arab world has been seized of the problem.

The union has expressed concern

PORT RASHID SETS RECORD IN 1983

Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 5 Feb 84 p 11

[Text]

THE year 1983 lived up to expectations for Port Rashid despite a general worldwide economic climate which gave every appearance of depressing the port's performance.

According to a Press release, total freight tonnage of import and export cargo rose to the all time record of 6,099,768 tonnes. Containerised export cargo at 158,553 freight tonnes rose by 19.72 per cent, while break-bulk exports at 80,436 freight tonnes were up 61.66 per cent on the same period during 1982.

Cargo expressed in freight tonnes imported in containers, showed a gain of 15.15 per cent for FCL consignments, and a substantial 67.22 per cent for LCL shipments of 330,260 freight tonnes, passing through the ports six shed container freight stations.

Imports of timber at 287,153 freight tonnes were 56.17 per cent up during the year, whilst foodstuff in bags increased by 56.94 per cent

reflecting the changing patterns of trade, the port's duty free storage area, received a total of 84,531 tonnes of cargo for storage, much of which was subsequently re-shipped to other markets.

Container movements expressed in TEU's were up 31.37 per cent at a record 296,826 of which 14,462 were LCL, a 57 per cent increase over 1982.

FCL containers increased by 29.14 per cent whilst transshipment boxes arriving showed a gain of 41.64 per cent.

To further encourage the expansion of container handling at the port, orders have been placed for an additional Mitsubishi container crane, back-up terminal tractors, trailers and straddle carriers, which will have the immediate effect of further reducing vessel turnaround times and providing increased efficiency to port users. This combined with expansion of the port's sophisticated computerised systems will ensure Port Rashid's leading port position into 1985 and beyond.

CSO: 4400/200

GOVERNMENT DEPORTS 4,727 LABORERS IN 1983

Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 22 Jan 84 p 3

[Article by Mervat Daib]

[Text]

THE number of labourers deported in 1983 for violating labour laws stood at 4,727—up by 20 per cent over the 1982 figure of 3,201, according to a report prepared by the labour inspection department.

Mr Abdul Latif Al Hashimi, director of the inspection department, attributed the increase to the present economic recession and ignorance on the part of the workers of the country's labour law.

With the completion of most of the infrastructure projects, he said, many of the labourers had become redundant. However, a number of sponsors had tried to bargain for letting them stay and find another job in the country and also for bringing them back to the country on other assignments.

The number of labourers arrested during the year was 5,359 as against 3,697 in 1982.

The number of violations of labour laws by commercial establishments was, however, down by 40 per cent compared to 1982. Mr Hashimi has attributed the decrease to his department's intensive inspection campaigns organised in 1982. Some 10,431 organisations had been found violating the labour law in 1982, while last year the figure stood at 9,266.

The number of inspections made last year was 850 compared to 4,769 in the previous year, he said.

The labour inspection teams detected violation of rules in 553 establishments last year as against 817 in 1982. Warning letters issued last year numbered 345 as against 445 in 1982.

Mr Hashimi thinks that due to recession the number of labour law violations by workers may increase this year. He, however, hoped that commercial establishments would strictly abide by the law.

CSO: 4400/198

COUNCIL CRACKS DOWN ON HOUSING IRREGULARITIES

Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 22 Jan 84 p 3

[Article by Latheef Farook]

[Text]

BACHELORS and single people living in Majlis Al Amar flats in Karama, Ghusais and Safiya areas of Dubai have been asked to vacate such apartments as early as possible. Similarly, families sharing accommodation with tenant families in these flats have also been asked to move out.

Explaining the move, Mr Ibrahim Abdullah, director of the Majlis, told Khaleej Times yesterday that the idea was to ensure a better social environment for the families legally occupying these apartments. As a policy, the Majlis apartments would now be allotted only to people with families, he said.

He said the existing practice of a tenant family sharing a flat with another family and, in some cases, even with two families, caused several social problems. The measure, he said, was intended to meet that situation. The bachelor tenants and sub-tenant families have been notified about the new decision of the Majlis and, on compassionate grounds, given sufficient time to find alternative accommodation, Mr Ibrahim said.

He said: "We understand the human problem involved in the move and, therefore, we have not asked them to leave the premises within 24 hours."

He said a clause had been added in all new tenancy agreements making the occupation of the Majlis flats by bachelors or families on sharing basis illegal. He warned the legal tenants—tenants whom an apartment is leased out by the Majlis—not to share their flats with other families. Any violation

of the rule will be dealt with severely, he added.

The Majlis has 1,440 single-room and double-room apartments in Safiya, 2,287 in Ghusais and 1,482 in Karama. The so-called 'White Complex' in Karama, also known as shopping complex, is not included in this category, as it comes directly under the administration of the Ruler's Office.

Illegal transfer

One major problem in managing the housing complexes of the Majlis, Mr Ibrahim said, was the illegal transfers of flats. Cases have come to light when leaving tenants hand over the possession of their flats to other people without the knowledge of the Majlis after receiving what is called 'key money.' At times, the household effects, too, become part of the deal. This 'fraudulent transfer' comes to the notice of the Majlis when the new occupants approach the Majlis for renewal of the lease.

Since most of these cases involve people with families, the Majlis officials give sufficient time to the illegal occupants to find alternative accommodation. This is done "purely on compassionate grounds" and only if such people cooperate and do not "try to be smart with the Majlis," by posing as original tenants.

In case anybody tries to hoodwink the Majlis, his signature is compared with that of the original tenant, and they differ, the renewal is not allowed.

Under the new system, tenants are required to submit two passport size photographs and photo-copies of their passports and work permits, which become part of the tenancy documents. The system is intended to act as deterrent to illegal transfers.

OFFICIAL CALLS FOR LESS RELIANCE ON FOREIGNERS

Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 6 Feb 84 p 3

[Text]

FOREIGNERS constituted 90 per cent of the country's workforce and about 10,000 expatriate workers, all of them legal immigrants, were without jobs at present, Mr Ahmed Al Jumeiri, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, told a Ras Al Khaimah gathering on Saturday.

He listed the UAE's proximity to some densely-populated Asian countries and the shortage of national manpower as major reasons for a massive inflow of foreign workforce.

The under-secretary, who was speaking at a meeting of the social reform and guidance society of the emirate, said that according to a 1980 study, the country's population had trebled as a result of the manpower inflow during the past eight years.

He said the country's major development programmes necessitated the presence of a large number of foreign workers. He, however, added that the negative aspects of the presence of foreigners outweighed the positive side.

"The presence of a large number of people with cultures and traditions alien to those of our society is not only eroding our system of life but is also straining the economy," Mr Ahmed Al Jumeiri said.

He said the country was obliged to expand various services only to meet the needs of the foreign workers.

He said that since the foreigners also included non-Muslims and those without any religion, their presence created an unhealthy situation for the society, which might, in the long run, harm Islam.

He called upon the people to give serious thought to the problem and fully avail themselves of the education facilities available in the country to take over the responsibility of running the country.

The under-secretary also suggested the use of modern technology to reduce dependence on foreign workforce. He also called on national women, to come forward and play an active role in the development process.

CSO: 4400/201

RA'S AL-KHAYMAH'S SALEH I FIELD OPENS

Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 10 Feb 84 p 1

[Article by Maruf Khwaja]

[Text]

RAS Al Khaimah yesterday formally joined the ranks of Arab oil producers when the Saleh I oil field was declared open by His Highness Shaikh Saqr bin Mohammed Al Qasimi, Member of the Supreme Council and Ruler of Ras Al Khaimah, at ceremonies held at the Diwan Amiri in Al Nakheel.

The inauguration ceremonies which were earlier due to be held at Mina Saqr were curtailed as a mark of mourning for the death in Paris of the UAE ambassador, Khalifa Ahmed Abdul Aziz Al Mubarak. The Crown Prince and Deputy Ruler of Ras Al Khaimah, Shaikh Khalid bin Saqr Al Qasimi denounced Mr Khalifa's assassination as "a criminal and terrorist act."

Shaikh Khalid, welcoming several hundred guests to the dedication ceremony, said the achievement at the Saleh I field had been the result of 20 years of exploration initiated by the RAK Ruler. Shaikh Khalid said the government made a big investment in the project.

The RAK Crown Prince said the accruing revenue will now be utilised to help activate the emirate's economy and assist it in its development programmes and march to progress.

Shaikh Khalid said that two wells in the Saleh I field were now producing 5,000 barrels of crude oil and 25 million cubic feet of gas per day. He also expected work on Saleh II field to begin within a few days. Shaikh Khalid announced the government's intention to put the gas at the disposal of the emirate.

Efforts lauded

Earlier, Phillip Wyche, Senior Vice President of Gulf Oil Company-Eastern Hemisphere, said the dedication of the first petroleum production in Ras Al Khaimah was symbolic of the cooperation, active participation and understanding given to the company by His Highness the Ruler and the government of Ras Al Khaimah in making the discovery of oil at Saleh field and bringing it into production.

He said the remarkable aspect of the operation was that production had been realised only 11 months after the initial discovery—a historic feat unparalleled by any other deep water operation.

Saleh I field is sited in 320 feet of water, 26 miles offshore.

The development of the Saleh I field consisted of a three-well early production system using production facilities supported on a jack-up rig, and an associated moored storage tanker.

At the time of the development approval in March 1983, a production target was set for January 1984 at a cost of \$86 million.

After Gulf Oil Company had prepared the basis for design and specification, McDermott of Dubai were awarded a contract to design, furnish materials, fabricate and instal three well platforms, one flare structure and several miles of pipelines. The contract included the installation of a mooring buoy for a storage tanker.

Contracts were also awarded to Imodoco for a two-year lease on a new mooring buoy and to Flopetrol for a 30,000 bpd leased process unit. The contract covered the unit's onshore

prefabrication, offshore installation and operation on a jack-up rig.

In July '83, a contract was awarded for the lease of the Afran Zodiac as a storage tanker.

In early October offshore construction was started. The flare structure, the two platforms and the mooring buoy, were installed in November and December '83.

Production facilities were completed on December 31.

Congratulating the Ruler and members of his government for establishing petroleum production in Ras Al Khaimah, Mr Wyche said the personal interest taken by Shaikh Saqr and the energy displayed by him in the venture, set an excellent example for his own company, Gulf Oil, and its partners to redouble their own efforts.

He looked to the future with a sense of renewed confidence in continuing cooperation for achieving greater success not only in the offshore area but also in the onshore concession.

Mr Wyche later presented a sample of oil from the Saleh I field to Shaikh Saqr. Mr Wyche received an engraved golden dagger, the traditional arm of the emirate from the RAK Ruler.

The ambassadors of the United States, West Germany and France as well as leading citizens and officials of the consortium attended the ceremonies.

Gulf Oil sources told Khaleej Times that an official estimate of the total reserves at Saleh I field had yet to be announced. Export of oil from this field is expected to begin well before June, he added.

Of the 5,000 bpd output, some 200,000 barrels had accumulated since initial production began on January 3, he said.

CSO: 4400/201

MINISTERIAL ORDER CLASSIFIES GOVERNMENT CONTRACTORS

Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 28 Feb 84 p 13

[Article by Latheef Farook]

[Text]

A MINISTERIAL order covering registration and classification of contractors dealing with the Ministry of Public Works and Housing is to be issued shortly.

According to this order, contractors wishing to deal with the ministry will have to register with it and the ministry will categorise them according to their capacity to undertake and complete a given project.

Explaining the 'order' in an interview with Khaleej Times yesterday, Mr Feisal Al Gurg, Director of Planning in the Dubai office of the Ministry, said "The order has been discussed with all relevant bodies and is to be issued by the Minister of Public Works and Housing, Mr Mohammed Khalifa Al Kindi, by the end of March.

Contractors dealing with the Ministry will be provided with questionnaires to be filled. From their answers, said Mr Feisal, "we would know the category into which a contracting firm falls."

While dropping all unqualified contractors, the ministry will ask the qualified contractors to organise their establishments in a way keeping in with the aims of the ministry.

The new order requires all contractors to register their firms with the ministry before their classification. Such firms should have a national shareholding of 51 per cent. Foreign contracting companies and establishments wanting to participate in the ministry's projects will have to have a local partner or an agent and fulfill certain other conditions for registration.

Civil construction works are, under the order, will be classified into road

works and buildings and contractors into six categories—super, first, second, third, fourth and fifth.

Only those, who have completed a single project costing more than Dh 50 million, will be placed in the super grade. In the first grade will be those who have executed projects costing between Dh 40 and Dh 50 million. Their grading will be done according to the size of projects successfully completed by each contracting firm.

The second grade groups contractors with jobs between Dh 20 and Dh 40 million, third between Dh 10 and 20 million, fourth between Dh 5 and Dh 10 million and the fifth grade Dh 5 million and less.

Contractors dealing with installations as electrical will be categorised into four grades such as super, first, second and third. These firms will also be graded according to the value of the work they have done. The excellent grade is for projects above Dh 10 million, first grade for Dh 6 to Dh 10 million and second grade for Dh 2 to Dh 6 million. The third category is for projects costing less than Dh 2 million.

All approved and classified contractors will also have to observe the following conditions:

The super grade contractors should have financial status, including equipment value, of not less than Dh 20 million and should have been carrying out contracting work for not less than seven years. These firms should have completed successfully a single project costing about Dh 50 million or two projects worth Dh 60 million during the past seven years. They also should have permanent technical sections including a chief engineer with 15 years of experience who will be

assisted by at least three engineers, each with an experience of not less than eight years.

The excellent grade firms should also have a permanent and fulltime accounting department headed by specialised accountant.

First grade firms will have a financial position to the value of Dh 10 million together with experience of six years in the field. They should have record of completing a single project worth Dh 30 million or two projects costing Dh 40 million during the six year period. The permanent technical division should be headed by a specialised engineer with 12 years experience and assisted by three engineers, each with at least six years' experience. Further the accounts section must be headed by a specialised accountant.

The financial status of a second grade contracting firm is fixed at Dh 5 million, besides it should have five years' experience, a technical division headed by specialised engineer with 10 years' experience and two engineers, each with five years' experience.

Second-grade contractors should have completed a single project costing Dh 15 million or two projects worth Dh 20 million during the past five year period.

The financial position of grade three establishments is put at about Dh 2 million with experience of four years in the UAE and a technical division headed by specialised engineer with eight years experience and another engineer with four years' experience. The other requirements include a permanent and fulltime accountant and completed a project costing Dh 10 million or two projects costing Dh 15 million during the four years period.

Grade four establishments must have a financial position of about Dh 1 million, three years' experience in the UAE, a permanent and fulltime engineer with six years' experience and a permanent and fulltime accountant and record of one completed project worth Dh 4 million or two projects costing Dh 5 million within the three year period.

The fifth the lowest grade, requires a financial position of about Dh 0.5 million, two years' experience in the UAE, one specialised permanent and fulltime engineer with five years' experience, an accountant of with the same experience and completed a project costing Dh 2 million or two projects worth Dh 3 million during past two years.

The requirements of installation establishments are:

Super grade: financial status Dh 2 million, experience five years, technical division with two engineers, an accounts section and two completed projects each costing not less than Dh 3 million or one project worth Dh 6 million during the relevant five years.

Grade I—Dh 1 million, four years' experience, a technical division headed by an engineer and an account section headed by an accountant and two completed projects each worth Dh 2 million or one project costing Dh 4 million during the preceding four years.

Grade II—Dh 3/4 million, three years' experience in the UAE, technical section headed by an engineer and accounts division headed by an accountant and two completed projects each costing Dh 1 million or two projects worth Dh 2 million.

Grade III requires a financial position of Dh 0.5 million, two years' experience in the UAE, a full-time engineer an accountant and two completed projects each costing Dh 200,000 or one worth Dh 500,000 during the preceding two years and a permanent address.

Companies fully owned by nationals will be partially exempted from in the matter of length of experience and will be placed in a higher grade if they meet the required technical and financial conditions. Similar exemptions may be made in the case of local engineers.

But all engineers attached to these firms should be members of the country's Engineering Society and should have documentary proofs for their qualifications and experience.

Contractors could be classified into more than one category provided they meet the required conditions. Contractors should also register with the concerned chamber of commerce and industry and possess a valid licence from the concerned municipality. A contractor falling in the lower grade could be placed higher if he meets the required conditions.

This order does not cover suppliers and industrial contractors labourer's wages and consultants.

The Minister of Public Works and Housing will set up a temporary committee to work out procedures for the implementation of this order and another committee to deal with the classification and registration. The classification committee will be headed by the assistant undersecretary for technical affairs.

Explaining the powers and functions of the classification committee, Mr Feisal Al Gurg said it is empowered to determine the capacity of each contractor, his financial position and any related matter.

A contractor he said, can complain about the committee's decision within 60 days from the time of being informed. All such complaints should be submitted to an appeal committee to be established by the minister and headed by the under secretary with representatives from the country's chambers of commerce and industry, the Federation of Chambers of Commerce and the Municipality General Secretariat. The decision of the appeal court will be final.

A contractor whose application was refused by classification and appeal committees will not be able to submit a fresh application before one year from the date his appeal is turned down.

A contractor can also participate in tenders up to two grades less than his own. Availability of modern equipment enhancing his competence will be advantageous in obtaining a higher grade.

The registration will be renewed after two years and a contractor should submit documentary evidence supporting his financial and other status together with projects completed within those two years. Unless these documents are produced registration will be considered cancelled after a three-month period from the date of expiry. In the event, such firms can be registered after six months from the date of cancellation.

The contractor, engineer and the work force will be collectively responsible to any kind of fraud or damage whether it was due to individual or collective action.

The order empowers the ministry to blacklist a firm for a period of not less than two years and not more than five years for violating agreements. In case of repetition, the errant firm will be banned permanently from dealing with the ministry.

For some offences, the name of the contractor should be deleted from the ministry's register, who cannot be re-registered for six months and can be placed in a lower grade.

In case a contractor fails to abide by the conditions of a contract and the ministry has to withdraw the work, he will be prohibited from carrying out any projects of the ministry for one year. He will be evaluated again after this period.

The order will come into effect four months from its date of issue.

PUBLIC WORKS MINISTRY SPENDS OVER 690 MILLION DIRHAMS IN 1983

Dubayy KHALEEL TIMES in English 7 Mar 84 p 3

[Text]

WITH 82 per cent of the work completed, the Ministry of Public Works and Housing had spent, till the end of last year, over Dh 690.6 million out of the Dh 841.377 million allocated for various projects, Mr Ahmed Al Tayer, Minister of State for Financial and Industrial Affairs, said in Dubai yesterday.

The allocation for electricity and power projects was Dh 368.962 million, and about 70 per cent work on these projects was completed at a cost of Dh 261.5 million. Similarly, on agriculture and fisheries projects, 79 per cent of work was carried out at a cost of Dh 100.675 million. The total allocation for the projects was Dh 136 million.

Most of these projects executed by the Ministry of Public Works and Housing related to 17 ministries and government departments.

The following are the details of the amount spent on the projects of various ministries: Education, Dh 148.332 million; Health, Dh 61.693 million; Public Works and Housing, Dh 186.878 million; Communica-

tions, Dh 158.37 million; Agriculture and Fisheries (projects executed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries itself) about Dh 14.9 million; Labour and Social Affairs, Dh 1.303 million; Islamic Affairs and Auqaf, Dh 15.112 million and Information and Culture, Dh 5.476 million.

CSO: 4400/205

CABINET APPROVES POLICE ACADEMY

Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 10 Jan 84 p 1

[Text]

THE Cabinet, meeting under the chairmanship of Deputy Prime Minister of the UAE and Crown Prince of Dubai Shaikh Maktoum bin Rashid, yesterday approved a draft law to set up a police academy.

Under the law, the minister of interior will appoint a board of directors to manage the academy. The ministry's under-secretary will be the chairman of the board and other members would be appointed from among senior officials.

The academy, according to the draft law, will conduct special studies in the training and development of the national police cadre, train the police force on modern lines, and equip both the trained police and the academy with sophisticated technology.

The academy is expected to be

instrumental in training officers for special duties.

The cabinet also approved, in principle, a proposal submitted by the Ministry of Planning for conducting the population census in 1985. The last time the population was counted was three years ago when the figure stood at more than a million. Since then the ministry has carried out important surveys on industry and trade. The surveys conducted by the Statistical Bureau of the ministry are also expected to highlight the issue of manpower for the next five-year plan.

The session also approved a draft law submitted by the Ministry of Finance and Industry on the closing of accounts for the year 1980. The cabinet also reviewed a report submitted by the Ministry of Trade and Economy on the outcome of the 41st session of Arab economic ministers recently held in Amman.

CSO: 4400/197

INTERNAL AFFAIRS REPORTS 1982 CRIME STATISTICS

Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 6 Mar 84 p 3

[Text]

THE number of crimes registered in the country last year totalled 23,443 compared with 18,434 in 1981. There were 17 cases of murder compared with 11 the previous year.

There were 663 sex-related crimes compared with 524 in 1981, 174 drug cases (159 in 1981) and 7,267 violations of immigration rules (4,307 in 1981).

The figures are contained in a report just released by the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The report also covers accidents and cases of traffic violations.

It says there were 124 assault cases last year as against 91 in 1981, disturbance of internal security 17 (12 in 1981), disorderly behaviour 42 (37 in 1981), theft cases 382 (315 in '81), liquor-related cases 66 (52 in '81) and other crimes involving individuals 117 as against 133 the previous year.

People convicted of selling drugs numbered 217. Among them 60 were Pakistanis, 43 Indians, 34 Omanis, 19 UAE nationals, 16 Egyptians, 11 Bahrainis, six Iranians, five Saudis, five Sudanese, five from other Asian countries, four from African countries, three from North Yemen, three Britons and three Americans.

According to the report, the number of registered vehicles in the country stood at 208,444—75,414 new registrations and 133,030 renewals. The number for the previous year was 192,031—74,823 new registra-

tions and 117,208 renewals.

Driving licence holders numbered 104,963 in 1982—51,011 new licences and 53,962 renewals—compared with 94,721—56,529 new and 38,192 renewals—in 1981.

Cases of traffic violations were 182,429 last year compared with 178,706 in 1981. The cases involving accidents were 24,647 in which 482 people died and 6,580 were injured. The comparative figure for the previous year was 21,360 accidents—460 deaths and 6,241 injuries.

The report says that people arrested by border guards last year numbered 1,266, compared with 562 in 1981. Illegal immigrants arrested during the year numbered 1,266—1,134 Iranians, 94 Pakistanis, 23 Indians, 7 Bangladeshis and three Somalis and six of other nationalities.

The report lists 661 incidents and cases in other categories—597 rescue missions, 11 cases of missing people, 11 fires at sea, 17 marine accidents, and eight pollution-related cases.

According to the report, the ministry's budget for the year 1982 was about Dh 1,038 million compared with Dh 886.155 million for 1981.

The ministry's projects development programme for 1982 included construction of a new building for the Immigration and Passport Department in Dubai, a police training school in Sharjah, a repairs and maintenance garage in Sharjah, and another in Abu Dhabi, a number of new police stations in various parts of the country and residential houses for police personnel.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

NATIONAL COUNCIL PASSES 235 CIVIL CODE ARTICLES

Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 7 Mar 84 p 1

[Text] THE Federal National Council approved 235 articles of the draft civil code at its regular session held in Abu Dhabi yesterday, under the chairmanship of the Speaker, Hilal Ahmed Lootah.

Abdullah Al Mazroui, Minister of Justice, Saeed Al Raghabani, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, Khalifa Agroobi, Under-Secretary Ministry of Justice and Dr Hamdi the adviser to the Ministry of Justice also attended the session.

The FNC had approved only ten of the L528 articles of the draft civil code during its last session.

Instead of discussion each and every article separately the Council decided to read several related articles together.

An important amendment was carried out to article No 11 which originally stipulated that a foreign company, which had its headquarters in Abu Dhabi, and was involved in a dispute with a UAE national or an organisation, would be subject to local laws. Rashid Kaitoo, a member, proposed the amendment that the law should cover all foreign companies, and not only those which had their headquarters in the country.

The FNC also discussed the jurisdiction of UAE law, over an issue which might have arisen abroad.

It was decided that if the issue in question concerned the affairs of a UAE national or a UAE organisation, then the UAE law would be applicable. However, if the matter was purely related to expatriates, and did not involve any UAE interests, then, it would be decided, if presented at the local courts, on the basic agreement or understanding that existed between the two parties.

The Ministry of Justice ruled that in the case of a UAE national marrying an expatriate, (and in the event of death or divorce), the UAE laws would be applicable.

In a case of bankruptcy, the members wanted to know why the law held the national agent or partner responsible. The justice ministry officials clarified that,

the stipulations made in articles 38 and 65, were in accordance with the Islamic law and the international agreements.

An agent was responsible before the law when he claimed to be an agent representing an establishment locally.

Earlier, the agriculture minister explained the ministry's efforts in marketing the local agricultural produce.

He said that the cabinet has set up a joint ministerial committee to frame a new marketing policy and study the feasibility of "canning" the surplus agricultural produce.

The minister said that the number of farms has increased from 7,500 in 1977 to more than 12,000 farms in 1983, while the agricultural produce increased from 40,000 tons in 1977 to more than 249,000 tons in 1983.

Earlier, a new member, Abdul Rahman Saif Al Churair, took an oath before the house.

CSO: 4400/205

DUBAYY AIRPORT REPORTS INCREASED AIR TRAFFIC

Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 11 Jan 84 p 3

[Text]

THE number of departures and arrivals at Dubai International Airport during 1983 each crossed the one million mark, a milestone in the development of air services in the emirate which now leads most of the Arab Gulf countries in terms of traffic volumes.

The airport handled altogether 3,572,597 passengers last year, an increase of 6.8 per cent over 1982's total of 3,361,408. The highest increase was in the number of departments—up 13.11 per cent from 902,543 to 1,020,901. The number of arriving passengers went up by 9.66 per cent—a total of 1,011,880 compared to 1982's figure of 922,734. The number of transiting passengers rose only marginally.

Freight movement also created a record, particularly in volumes lifted which rose impressively by 48.91 per cent, that is almost by half as much as the previous year. The airport handled 82.5 million kg of freight—incoming

and outgoing—compared to 72.2 million kg in 1982 which itself was a record year.

Explaining the statistics released yesterday by DNATA, an official said a great part of the increase in outbound cargo was attributed to a spurt in the re-export trade by air. Cargo rates were lower last year than ever before as a result of severe competition among carriers and the surplus capacity brought to Dubai by 41 airlines operating through the emirate.

Three or four destinations make up for the bulk of this volume increase including Teheran and Kabul. While the Iranian factor is likely to be moderate this year following new import restrictions, re-exports to Kabul of textile and electronic goods are expected to be maintained at last year's levels.

The DNATA figures show average daily traffic of passengers to be 9,788 representing 2,797 departures, 2,772 arrivals and 4,219 transit passengers. Daily cargo traffic amounted to 226,102 kg.

CSO: 4400/197

MORALITY RATE FIGURES RELEASED

Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 17 Jan 84 p 2

[Text]

THE number of deaths in the two to four age group, recorded in Al Ain during 1983, was 36 as against 581 in the 15 to 45 age group, according to figures released by the preventive medicine department.

The mortality figure in other age groups, specially above 60, was not recorded.

A total of 7,041 births—3,614 boys and 3,427 girls—were registered during the same period. Of them, 2,699 babies were born to nationals and 4,342 to expatriates. Compared to 1982, the number of births of nationals was up by 12 and that of expatriates by 59.

The department said that 43,982 children were treated for various diseases during the year and 9,729 cholera vaccinations administered.

The department issued health certificates to 7,137 people working in eating places, besides 307 barbers, 456 launderers and 1,707 other work-

ers, including agriculturists.

Quoting the department's Dubai office figures, a WAM report says that during the last quarter of 1983, 867 children were born to nationals—442 boys and 425 girls—and 2,181 to expatriates—1,099 boys and 1,082 girls.

The number of first dose of a three-dose vaccination stood at 2,291, while those of second and third at 1,065 and 1,781, respectively.

The following are the details of other vaccinations: 1,340 activating dose, 2,738 first dose of polio vaccine, 2,343 second dose, 2,070 third dose and 1,838 activating dose, 1,231 for measles, 1,300 for pulmonary tuberculosis, 16,021 for cholera and 20 for typhoid.

Maternity and child care centres attended 171 pregnancy cases, 242 after delivery cases, 1,110 new-born babies and 1,808 infants. The centres organised 19 symposiums on mother and child care and 442 home and 524 hospital visits.

CSO: 4400/198

LABOR MINISTRY SEES MORE DIVORCE, FOREIGN SPOUSES

Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 11 Feb 84 p 3

[Article by Mervat Diab]

[Text]

PARENTS' interference with the life of a married couple and greater financial demands of a wife are some of the major causes of higher incidence of divorce in the country, according to the findings of a study conducted by the Social Welfare Department of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

Describing the trend as a serious threat to the growth of a stable and happy family life, Mr Abdullah Abu Shehab, ministry's Assistant Under Secretary, said that even those who married for the first time and were unable to meet the responsibilities of domestic life, were opting for divorce.

"And this tendency is not confined to mixed marriages but is also visible in greater degree where both husbands and wives are nationals," he added. He called for more studies on the subject to reach the root of the problem for working out effective solutions.

Giving the other details of the study conducted on 440 cases selected from a cross section of nationals in the country, he said that the prohibitive cost of a national bride and the resultant increase in the number of mixed marriages were other destabilising factors in the life of national families.

Eighty-three per cent of nationals who went for a non-national wife, according to the findings, had no other option because a national bride was,

financially, beyond their reach. The desire for more children accounted for mixed marriages in 14 per cent cases, the study shows. Only 20 per cent of nationals who brought a foreign wife did so to overcome the age difference that existed between them and their relatively older wives.

Foreign wives were popular only with the illiterates and the poor. Over 60 per cent of the nationals who married outside the country were totally illiterate and most of them, by the Emirates' standard, were living at subsistence level. University graduates accounted only for 1.6 per cent of mixed marriages. Ninety per cent of the mixed marriages were found in Ras Al Khaimah followed by Umm Al Quwain (83 per cent) and Fujairah (44 per cent). Most of husbands were government employees with a very low income.

According to the study, eight per cent of nationals who married a foreigner were living on doles—70 per cent of them were either fishermen or farmers.

Twice and in some cases thrice married nationals, according to the study, went for a foreign wife. And the age group in most of the cases was 40 to 60. Nationals belonging to middle age group opted for a foreign wife, in 27 per cent cases, when rejected by a national family.

Most of the foreign women marrying a national belonged to under-20 age group.

BRIEFS

AL-SHARIQAH INCREASE IN BUSINESS--WITH 13,233 trade licences issued in 1983, the year witnessed a significant increase in business activity in the emirate of Sharjah, according to a spokesman of the municipality. Since 1974 when the Sharjah Municipality introduced the licencing system for all kinds of trade, the commercial activity in the emirate has been growing rapidly, rising to almost 13 times of what it was nine years ago. Quoting the figures of the statistics department of the municipality, the spokesman said in the building sector, the year 1977 was the peak year, both for apartment buildings and villas. In 1969, when the building activity came under the licencing system, only 188 licences were issued. Gradually, the number increased and upto the end of 1983 stood at 25,500 for all types of structures, villas and industrial, commercial and residential buildings. The following are the year-wise figures of the trade licences issued by the municipality: 1974, 1,030; 1975, 1,428, 1976, 2,770; 1977, 3,560; 1978, 5,050; 1979, 6,265; 1980, 7,830; 1981, 6,163; 1982, 11,870 and 1983, 13,233. Other figures included in the report are: the total number of tenancy contracts signed by the municipality from 1977 to 1983 was 48,000. In 1977, the number stood only at 1,531, rising in 1982 and 1983 to 11,000 and 9,700 respectively. The number of trade licences of all categories, issued since 1974, according to the report, totalled 60,000. [Text] [Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 8 Jan 84 p 3]

CENTRAL BANK ASSETS--THE budget of the Central Bank at the end of September reached Dh 11.875 billion. A statistical report issued yesterday by the bank said its assets consisted of Dh 9,688 billion foreign assets, Dh 1,700 billion deposits and running accounts (Dh 1,609 billion deposits and Dh 92 million running accounts) and Dh 487 million other assets. The liabilities consisted of Dh 2,932 billion issued currency, Dh 715 million deposits on demand, Dh 2,002 billion term deposits and Dh 1,296 billion obligations in foreign currency. The capital and reserves amounted to Dh 2,927 billion and other liabilities Dh 902 million. [Text] [Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 14 Dec 83 p 29]

POWER, WATER PROJECTS FOR 1983--THE Ministry of Electricity and Water spent Dh 173.5 million on various projects last year--about Dh 132.8 million in power sector and Dh 40.7 million on water projects--according to a report released by the ministry in Dubai yesterday. The ministry, during the year, signed six contracts for developing Ras Al Khaimah electricity network and another 10 for the digging of water wells. [Text] [Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 17 Jan 84 p 3]

BAN ON AHMADIYAH SECT--ANY CLUB or organisation of the Ahmediya community should not be allowed to function within the country. This was stated in a memorandum issued by the Ministry of Islamic Affairs and Auqaf in Abu Dhabi yesterday. The memorandum is intended to focus public attention on activities of the community, declared non-Muslim by Islamic organisations. The memorandum, inter alia, states: "...the community cooperates with the imperialist countries and operates against the tenets of Islamic Shariah in the name of Islam to mislead Muslims generally." The memorandum said that the members of this community should not be given any recognition, including the certificates or documents issued by them or by their organisations. Similarly, the memorandum has disallowed their burials in Muslim graveyards. [Text] [Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 4 Feb 84 p 3]

ABU DHABI EXPLORATORY DRILLING--AN ambitious drilling operation has been launched in a marine concession area of the Abu Dhabi emirate, to detect hydrocarbon structures that would provide natural gas unaccompanied by crude oil. Informed sources said a recently-completed exploratory drilling programme had shown promising hydrocarbon structures that are known to exist in the Abu Buksh field laying offshore Abu Dhabi. Recently, an exploratory well was drilled to a depth of 1,500 feet in the concessional area but the well, only proved indicative. It was then decided to launch an extensive drilling programme for drilling five more wells around the first well. Currently liquid natural gas is being exported through the Das Island terminal. But it is reported, that the present rate of production of liquid gas has suffered due to a slackening of production in crude oil. The production is said to have gone down by about 51 per cent, due to a cutback in oil production. Sources point out that the Umm Shaif oilfield, one of the major suppliers of gas to the island, is also shut down for maintenance work. In accordance, with the present situation, the authorities are exploring for natural gas structures to boost the production of gas. It is expected that an increase in gas production would offset the losses suffered due to the cutback in oil production. Japan, which is largest buyer of UAE crude, is known to have reduced its demand, which sources point out, could range up to 50,000 barrels of crude oil. Meanwhile it is reported that the development programme announced by Adco, costing five billion dollars, is to be shelved presently in view of the adverse trends in the oil market. [Text] [By Ahmed Hassan] [Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 12 Feb 84 p 13]

AL-SHARIQAH AIRPORT RECORD FREIGHT--FREIGHT handled by Sharjah International Airport last month reached the highest level for a single month since the new airport began operating six years ago. The phenomenal volume handled--4,814 tons, is largely accounted for a spurt in transshipment activity by exporters abroad taking advantage of low cargo rates prevailing in the Gulf, according to industry sources. January also saw the start of a promising export drive based on the large surplus of fresh vegetables being produced by farms in Sharjah, Ras Al Khaimah and Al Ain growing regions. These vegetable surpluses are now being flown to places as far away as the Soviet Union, as seen in the despatch last month of a consignment of 20 tons of tomatoes for Moscow. Trade sources expect the export momentum to be maintained at least for the duration of the growing season. Altogether, freight volumes handled by Sharjah increased by 2,203 per cent in January compared to the previous January figures. Freight out improved vastly from 38 tons in January, 83 to 234 tons last month,

while incoming freight increased from 171 tons to 318. Freight in transit was 4,262 tons. In contrast, there was a marked decline in the volume of passengers handled, the first such fall in many months of operation. The airport handled 5,242 incoming passengers as against 8,262 in January 1983, the departures were down from 7,797 to 6,790 but more passengers transited during the month so that the overall movement of people was only marginally affected. The drop in incoming passengers is attributed to European tourists visiting the UAE this season. An addition to airport statistics is also provided in January figures which mention the volume of mail handled--three tons in, 2 tons out and 29 tons transit. [Text] [Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 19 Feb 84 p 2]

NORTHERN EMIRATES PIPELINE--THE Emirates General Petroleum Corporation's two year old pipeline project designed to supply gas from Sharjah's Sajaa field to power stations in the Northern Emirates is expected to be completed next month. The project's final phase--procurement and installation of computer, telemetry, telecommunication and power supply systems--is now more than half-way through and the pipeline is expected to become fully operational next month. A spokesman for the Emirates Trading Company, member of Al Makhawai group of companies and agents for AEG-Telefunken, suppliers of the highly sophisticated equipment, said the installation began last December under a 40 million dirhams contract that also covers commissioning of the support systems, which begin at the main control station at Sajaa wellhead. The 220-kilometre pipeline supplies Sajaa gas to Leah power station in Sharjah and units in Manama, Galila and Fujeirah among others projected as the system gets into full gear. Work on the upgrading of the line to Leah from the present 18 inches is understood to be in hand. The line's computer--nerve centre of the supply network--is being sited at the main station near Sajaa. Telemetry links are installed at station points along the course of the system from the control station to the various power units. The equipment's installation is being supervised by a team of 25 AEG-Telefunken engineers and technicians. [Text] [Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 15 Feb 84 p 15]

FIRST AEROFLOT CARGO PLANE LANDS--FIRST Soviet airlines Aeroflot cargo plane arrived at Sharjah International Airport from Bombay yesterday. It was received by Robert Tabet, deputy general manager, and Ahmed Al Mils, public relations manager, of Sharjah Airport Authority. Also present were Vladimir Sakhanov, Middle East manager of Aeroflot based in Beirut, Kovaltchouk Viatcheslav, manager, and Krymzenkov Vladislav, assistant manager of the airline in Abu Dhabi. The plane was flown by Capt. Hieksandrov. The flight on an Ilyushin-76 aircraft inaugurates a scheduled weekly service linking Sharjah with a route the airline operates from Moscow to South East Asia. The aircraft will arrive in Sharjah every Sunday and depart for Moscow on Mondays at 8 a.m. The aircraft was being loaded with general cargo and a consignment of 20 tons of UAE grown tomatoes for the Russian market. Expectations are that tomatoes, which are surplus to local market requirements, will form a regular consignment for despatch on coming Aeroflot flights. Aeroflot's II-76 aircraft have a capacity of between 30 to 40 tons of cargo depending on the fuel load. The route into Sharjah passes through Karachi, Bombay, Calcutta, Vientiane and Hanoi to the east, with the flight's origin varying according to requirements. Out of Sharjah however the flight would be headed for Moscow. [Text] [Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 6 Feb 84 p 12]

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

NATIONAL GROUPING OF PATRIOTIC FORCES HOLDS CONGRESS

Cairo AL-WAHDAH in Arabic No 41, 20 Jan 84 pp 3-7

[Article by Muhammad Shawdari: "The First Congress of the National Grouping Is Held in a Democratic Atmosphere and Elects the Members of the National Council"; Cairo AL-WAHDAH in Arabic; monthly organ of the National Grouping of Patriotic Forces in the Yemeni South]

[Text] The National Grouping of Patriotic Forces in the Yemeni South has announced the formation and election of its National Council and the election of the executive board, which is an extension of the grouping's first congress. Moreover, it was announced that the executive board elected the "general secretariat, as the grouping's supreme authority when the leadership boards and the general congress are not in session."

The grouping's first national congress held a series of important meetings in one of the states of the Arab nation from 15 to 19 January. During the congress, the grouping discussed the strategy of patriotic activity and the internal rules and regulations that govern its life and internal relations.

The political statement issued by the congress today announced, "The delegates to the congress took a historic and responsible stand on the political situation experienced by our southern region in particular and the great political events being experienced by our Yemeni region and our Arab nation in general."

The political statement considered the issue of freedom and democracy, describing it as "one of the most important of the struggle-oriented tasks being confronted by the grouping, which considers it to be an essential, urgent matter. Our people are looking for its realization."

The congress opposed the exposed political maneuvers being played by the separatist regime in the southern region with regard to the issue of national unity, affirming that "Yemeni unity can only be achieved by unionists who believe in it through a true, democratic, popular vision. It cannot be achieved via the shining, empty slogans the regime tries to proclaim from time to time for daily consumption and in order to neutralize the vehement vengeance of the people."

The congress had high praise for "the distinguished, historic role played by the patriotic regime in the northern region under the leadership of the brother and leader, President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, via its unionist orientation and persistent struggle to achieve Yemeni unity and lay the foundations of democracy."

The congress also lauded "the historic, national position taken by the regime in the northern region on fateful issues, especially its position of supporting and backing the brother region of Iraq in its just war against expansionist Iranian aggression. In addition, it has supported the Palestinian revolution, under the leadership of the PLO, and aided our people in the brother region of Lebanon."

In its political statement, the congress criticized the treacherous stabs directed by the southern region's regime "against the Eritrean revolution from behind at the direction of its masters. It has stood by the fascist regime in Ethiopia in its oppression of the movement of the armed Eritrean revolution."

The congress, in its political statement, criticized the collusive position taken by the regime in the southern region without embarrassment or shame in support of "the racist, expansionist Iranian regime in its aggression against our brother country of Iraq. In this position, it has followed the example of its associates, those Arabs of speech and nationality, al-Asad and al-Qadhdhafi."

The congress's statement described the open-door policy proclaimed by the regime in the southern region toward the states of the peninsula and the Gulf as follows: "It was neither produced by an independent, national decision nor brought forth from a conviction in terms of Arab and national orientation. Rather, it was an implementation of an expedient, tactical policy, both on the level of the regime itself and on the level of the foreign policy tied to the current stage on the Arab and international levels."

The political statement announced that the National Grouping of Patriotic Forces in the Yemeni South supported its brothers in the brother region of Iraq and renewed its blessing of the heroic Iraqi army's victories. It also had high praise for Iraq's wise positions in support of peace. The statement urged Islamic and international public opinion to try to convince Iran to abandon its aggressive policy and accept the voice of truth and peace, "so that the war imposed on Iraq will end."

The statement affirmed that the National Grouping "rejects the theories of hegemony and foreign presence, no matter what its form or essence, in our Yemeni territory and Arab region."

(See text of statement on pages 4, 5, 6 and 7)

[Text of Statement]

O masses of our people in South Yemen,

O masses of our Yemeni people everywhere,

O masses of our Arab nation, between 15 and 19 January 1984, the combatants in the National Grouping of Patriotic Forces in the Yemeni South held their first congress under the complex and delicate circumstances being experienced by the masses of our people in the southern region of Yemen. At the same time, our Arab nation is weighed down by burdens and is in a state of deterioration as a result of mistaken and collusive policies that have even conspired against the Arab nation. These policies have been carried out by some Arab regimes and the political forces and factions connected to them. At their vanguard have been the Damascus regime, the regime in Tripoli West, and the Aden regime.

The delegates to the congress discussed, analyzed, and evaluated the course of their work in the past, beginning with the first meeting of the factions engaged in patriotic activity in March 1980 and the creation of the grouping's founding committee. They also dealt with the accompanying and resultant issues that concern the grouping's internal situation. The members unanimously ratified the National Action Charter and the working strategy for the next stage. They also unanimously ratified the internal rules and regulations that govern the life and internal relations of the grouping.

In a magnificent democratic atmosphere dominated by a feeling of historic responsibility, the national council was elected. It in turn elected the grouping's executive board. Then the brother members-elect of the executive board held a private meeting that elected the general secretariat, which will be the grouping's supreme authority when the leadership councils and the general congress are not in session, O struggling masses of Yemen.

O masses of our Arab people, the delegates to the congress took a responsible, historic stand on the political situation being experienced by our southern region in particular and the great political events being experienced by our Yemeni region and our Arab nation in general.

On the Level of the Southern Half:

The unity of the factions engaged in patriotic activity in the southern arena was announced, as well as the emanation of the National Grouping of Patriotic Forces as a struggling, unionist, revolutionary vanguard leading the struggle of our people in the south, who have been vanquished by the dictatorial, repressive regime that has been imposed on the masses of our people. The announcement was a distinguished, revolutionary, qualitative step along the path of our patriotic struggle. To be precise, this came after the dictatorial, authoritarian regime in our beloved south

violated the capabilities and achievements of the glorious revolution of 14 October and began to distort its concepts, content, and patriotic, national, progressive goals.

The momentous, serious events witnessed by the southern arena during the last 3 years express with complete truthfulness the haphazardness of this regime and its distance from the real concerns of the sons of our people and their ambitions and aspirations, which were formulated by the goals of the Yemeni revolution. The core of this regime's thinking and activity consists of a policy of clinging to the seats of power, depending on foreigners, and accepting their tutelage.

O masses of our struggling people, we affirm that the atmosphere of repression and the methods of oppression and terrorism practiced by the regime against the sons of our people and their patriotic, combatant vanguards only increase our determination to continue the struggle to liberate man and achieve democracy and social and political justice all through our country, so that it can regain its true independence, which the current regime has dishonored with its policy of humiliating dependence on foreigners.

The cause of freedom and democracy is one of the main struggle-oriented concerns that the grouping confronts. It considers it to be an essential, urgent matter, to whose realization our people look forward. The true and effective participation of the popular masses in the process of political, economic, social, and cultural change, as expressed by their patriotic, combative forces, which resisted the British occupation with great courage and ferocity, lies at the heart of our conception of patriotic, democratic activity. Moreover, opening the way for general freedoms and mass, popular activity in its various sectors is a democratic requirement for whose realization our masses are struggling. As for the emancipated cardboard forms and models created by the authorities, their true character is obvious and the nature of their work is clear, since it is absolutely impossible for them to be an alternative to the true democracy for which our people and their patriotic, democratic, struggling vanguards yearn.

The congress also opposed the obvious political maneuvers being conducted by the separatist regime in the southern region with regard to the issue of national unity. The congress believes that Yemeni unity will only be achieved by unionists who believe in it and have a true, popular, democratic viewpoint. It will not be achieved via the shining, empty slogans the regime tries to proclaim from time to time for daily consumption and in order to deflect the fierce desire of the people to wreak their vengeance on it. On the other hand, the congress highly praised "the distinguished, historic role being played by the patriotic regime in the northern region under the leadership of the brother and leader, President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, via its unionist orientation and persistent struggle to achieve Yemeni unity and lay the foundations of democracy."

The congress also lauds the historic national position taken by the regime in the northern region on fateful national issues, especially its position of supporting and backing the brother region of Iraq in its just war against expansionist Iranian aggression, as well as its support for the Palestinian revolution under the leadership of the PLO and its aid to our Arab people in the brother region of Lebanon.

O masses of our struggling people in our steadfast south,

O masses of our Arab nation;

The dictatorial regime suffocating the breath of our people in southern Yemen is currently trying to fool us into thinking that it is a nationalist regime that cares about its Arabism and its nation. However, the true state of affairs is quite the opposite. The Eritrean issue is still losing blood as a result of the treacherous stabbing blow directed at it from behind when this regime fell into line and, in obedience to its masters, supported the fascist regime in Ethiopia in its oppression of the movement of the armed Eritrean revolution, thereby aiding foreign invaders against our rebelling nationalist brothers. The regime reaffirmed this collusive position without embarrassment or shame when it supported the expansionist, racist Iranian regime in its aggression against our brother country of Iraq. In so doing, it followed the example of those Arabs of tongue and nationality, al-Asad and al-Qadhdhafi. Though the regime may try to distance itself in one way or another from the positions taken by the regimes of al-Asad and al-Qadhdhafi, these games and maneuvers cannot fool the masses of our people and nation. Matters are evaluated by position and daily action, and not by anything else. It would be better for this regime to take a nationalist, responsible stand with its brothers, instead of opening new pages in its developed political and economic relations with the Iranian regime, which hates Arabism and Islam.

Indeed, these anti-nationalist positions taken by the regime in Aden are also reflected in its stands on the Palestinian cause and revolution. Its positions do not transcend the policy of blocs and international axes.

We do not view the patriotic and national cause and positions taken on it in terms of individuals who succeed each other in power, with each one bearing the responsibility for the positions and errors of those who preceded him in power. Rather, we attribute them to the regime as a whole, since we believe that the cause of the citizenry is an integral one that cannot be subdivided in political, economic, or social terms.

The policy of openness to the states of the Arabian peninsula and the Arabian Gulf, whose latest expression is the decision to normalize relations with our brother country, the Sultanate of Oman, is neither the product of an independent national decision nor the fruit of a convinced Arab, national orientation and a serious desire to return to the fold of the Arab nation and abandon the policy of blocs and circles that conflicts with the higher national interest. Rather, it was adopted in order to implement an expedient, tactical policy, on both the level of the regime itself and that of its current foreign policy on the Arab and international levels.

Despite these complications and interactions, we affirm that we always welcome any national or pan-Arab step that is sincere in its orientation, whether it is taken on the national level or on the pan-Arab level, for we are absolutely convinced that our cause and national interest are part of the cause of the Arab nation and its higher interest. Therefore, we support any new positive position that can achieve a true opening up to the people and the struggling patriotic forces inside the country, as well as any positive orientation toward the realization of Yemeni unity. Thus, we back the establishment of developed Arab relations that will lead in the end to the return of our southern region to the fold of its Arab and Islamic nation. We mean a true return that will eliminate every trace of influence, hegemony, and foreign presence in our country. On the basis of the foregoing, we call all Arab, Islamic, and friendly countries to support the struggle of our people in the south to liberate the land and its population from all foreign influence, terminate the oppression imposed on them, and challenge the methods of oppression and terrorism practiced by the regime against them.

On the Arab Level:

The serious political situation and the momentous events being witnessed by the Arab world express a state of unusual collapse and disintegration in Arab politics and the pan-Arab struggle against a serious Zionist-imperialist plot whose stages are being implemented with great precision and ability. This vicious attack on the Arab nation has found in the traitorous positions and policies of the Syrian, Libyan, and South Yemeni regimes fertile soil in which to grow and flourish, as well as an easy, prepared road by which to reach its dangerous, conspiratorial goals.

The Palestinian revolution and its legitimate leadership as represented by the PLO have been the victims of sabotage, oppression and wholesale killing practiced by the Syrian regime, whose acts have complemented the Zionist bombardment and siege of the Palestinian resistance in northern Lebanon. These criminal, traitorous acts by the al-Asad regime and its allies form a serious link in the plot against the Palestinian revolution. This regime must be opposed and resisted with all possible force.

While we affirm our backing and support for the Palestinian revolution and its legitimate leadership under the command of Brother Yasir 'Arafat, we sharply criticize the position of the Syrian and Libyan regimes. We call on all Arabs to aid the Arab right and stand by the Palestinian revolution in its confrontation with this dangerous plot, which is attacking the unity of the revolution and its independent national decision-making power.

Though the sky of the Arab nation may be full of black, somber clouds, bright rays from the national liberation struggle are emerging from the eastern flank of the Arab homeland to light the way in front of the masses of our nation for the sake of a better tomorrow for them. The heroic battles being waged by our brother country of Iraq are a source of glory and pride for all honorable Arabs.

The Nationalist Grouping of Patriotic Forces in the Yemeni South, which has supported its brothers in the Iraqi region since the beginning of the war and has been honored to participate symbolically on the battle fronts renews its blessing of the victories achieved by the heroic army of Iraq in its recent battles. It praises highly Iraq's wise positions in support of peace, which have come in response to the calls for peace issued by the Islamic Conference Organization and the Islamic and international mediation committees. It urges Islamic and international public opinion to exert new efforts to convince Iran to abandon its aggressive policy and accept the voice of peace and truth, so that the war imposed on Iraq will end and Iraq will once again be free to concentrate on building and playing its pan-Arab role with its brothers in order to confront the threat of Zionism and its allies, which have designs on the Arab nation and its wealth. Thus, the grouping calls on all the sincere people among the sons of the Arab nation to support both what is right and Iraq in its pan-Arab battle in a manner integrated with their stand in support of the people of Lebanon, for the sake of the liberation, unity, and reconstruction of their country. In this way, Lebanon can once again be strong and unified, in terms of both its people and its land, as it once was, thereby giving added power to the Palestinian revolution and the fateful causes of the Arab nation.

On the International Level

O our struggling masses:

The National Grouping of Patriotic Forces in the Yemeni South affirms its belief in freedom and independence for all peoples and nations. On this basis, we reject both the theories of hegemony and any foreign presence on our Yemeni land and in our Arab region, no matter what its form or essence might be. In this way, we continue our belief in the principle of cultural interaction among peoples and nations and the creation of balanced relations between states. All this is based on our belief in the charter of the United Nations, the resolutions of the Islamic Conference, and the principles of the Organization of Non-Aligned States. We also affirm our absolute faith in positive neutrality and non-alignment, and we commit ourselves to following these ideas as a sufficient program for strengthening the desire of our Arab, Muslim people in Yemen and our Arab nation to assert the nation's identity and confirm its nobility and existence, so that the Arab nation will occupy its own lofty position and have an opportunity to perform its cultural and humane role among the nations of the world, far removed from international struggles and ambitions and outside the framework of the regions of international influence.

Since we affirm this, we emphasize our support for the truth. We will help all the oppressed, wherever they may be, while at the same time calling on all states that love peace, freedom, democracy, and what is good to support our people in their just struggle for democracy, freedom, and both Yemeni and Arab unity.

12224

CSO: 4404/358

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

ASSASSINATION ATTEMPTS AGAINST REGIME FIGURES ALLEGED

Cairo SAWT AL-JANUB AL-YAMANI in Arabic No 71, 31 Jan 84 p 22

[Cairo SAWT AL-JANUB AL-YAMANI in Arabic; monthly organ of the United National Front of South Yemen]

[Text] The regime held ceremonies in the governorate of attended by Mr 'Ali Ahmad 'Antar, the deputy prime minister, and Salih Muslih Qasim, in place of the president of the communist regime. It was their task to distribute the Order of 14 October to the combatants from the 14 October revolution in the area of Yafi'. During the ceremonies and at the height of the feverish excitement, the electricity was cut off suddenly and someone opened fire in the direction of 'Ali 'Antar and Salih Muslih, who dropped to the ground and were miraculously saved. At the same time, four of those accompanying them fell dead. According to a statement by the authorities, the perpetrator was apprehended.

The regime stated that the perpetrator wanted to take revenge for his father and brother, who were part of the counterrevolution. It said he returned from the Gulf, where he was working, in order to avenge them.

However, reports coming from regime sources affirmed that the young man was put forth as a scapegoat in order to cover up a plot organized by the authorities themselves in order to get rid of 'Ali 'Antar and Salih Muslih and settle scores among the main figures of the regime, who are fighting for power.

The reports confirmed that the president of the current regime, 'Ali Nasir Muhammad, was behind the incident. He asked some of his assistants in the state security agency to organize this massacre in order to be rid of his competitor and murderous, mortal enemy, Salih Muslih, while simultaneously getting rid of his colleague, 'Ali 'Antar, with a single blow.

It has been said repeatedly in Aden that 'Ali Nasir Muhammad was the object of an assassination attempt after this incident. The situation between the top figures in the regime has become tense. This has caused the postponement of the conference of what is known as the ruling Yemeni Socialist Party.

One wonders what the surprises of the next few days will produce.

12224

CSO: 4404/358

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

BRIEFS

ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT ON CHAIRMAN--Information coming from Aden has stated that the agencies of the presidency of the republic have uncovered an attempt to assassinate 'Ali Nasir Muhammad. In the last moments of its implementation, 'Ali Nasir Muhammad was supposed to visit the region of Yafi'. He suddenly canceled this visit after his agencies learned of the attempt. A group of young men from the ruling party in Aden had become convinced that it was 'Ali Nasir Muhammad who killed Muhammad Salih Muti', the former minister of foreign affairs. They decided to get rid of 'Ali Nasir Muhammad. When he learned of this attempt, he sent Major 'Ali 'Antar to the region of Yafi' in his stead. The masses received him with shouts against 'Ali Nasir Muhammad. Those who took part in the attempt were arrested. There were three of them, including the commissioner of the western district. They were executed immediately. [Text] [Cairo AL-WAHDAH in Arabic No 41, 20 Jan 84 p 10] [Cairo AL-WAHDAH in Arabic; monthly organ of the National Grouping of Patriotic Forces in the Yemeni South] 12224

CSO: 4404/358

HUNDREDS REPORTEDLY DIE IN SOVIET REPRISALS

Kuala Lumpur NEW STRAITS TIMES in English 9 Feb 84 p 10

[Text]

ISLAMABAD, Wed. -- Soviet occupation troops killed hundreds of Afghan civilians in a massive punitive operation against the rural population in the Shomali region of Afghanistan last week, according to Western diplomatic sources here and in New Delhi.

Istalef, a historic town half destroyed in a similar reprisal last October, was the worst hit among the six places subjected to heavy ground and air attacks north of the Afghan capital of Kabul between Feb 2 and 4, the sources said.

Other towns punished for their support for the anti-Soviet resistance were Qarabagh, Guldara, Charikar and Shakardara and nearby villages.

Soviet ground troops reportedly swooped on

Istalef several hours before dawn last Thursday and in a rampage captured or killed 10 Mujahidin resistance fighters, and set fire to their houses and private vehicles.

Those captured were taken out of the town, "often with their wives and children", and butchered by slitting their throats. Their bodies were stuffed in wells, the sources said, quoting survivors reaching Kabul.

In New Delhi, diplomatic sources said the Soviet themselves had suffered considerable casualties, with at least 50 Russian soldiers killed

either in action or in captivity.

Diplomats said the Soviet reprisal operation was the latest sting of the rising brutality in the war.

They said that unlike in the past, when the Mujahidin held Soviet captives for a later exchange of prisoners, they were now killing and sometimes torturing the Soviet troops captured.

"This is not a 20th century war," a diplomat said. "The Soviets are up against a tough mountain terrain and tough, fanatical fighters."

At the same time, the Soviet are responding in

kind to the rebels and the local population, and are now trying to "smoke out" areas which once were among Afghanistan's most fertile and densely-populated regions.

"The Russians want to bring these areas completely under their control with those thousands of Afghans who were raised and trained in the Soviet Union," a diplomat who until recently lived in Afghanistan said.

The diplomat said that in spite of rising casualties and more intensified fighting, the Soviets in the end had the greater "stamina" and would finally subdue all of Afghanistan.

Reports in New Delhi meanwhile said that the Soviet-backed regime in Afghanistan had launched a diplomatic offensive among Islamic countries to show that despite Moscow's influence and the war, it was still above all an Islamic country.

Afghanistan's Department of Islamic Affairs sent invitations to clerics and Islamic scholars in Muslim countries to attend a conference in Kabul "to experience first-hand the religious Islamic characteristics and atmosphere in Afghanistan."

CSO: 4600/455

SOVIETS READY FOR OFFENSIVE AFTER MUJAHIDIN REFUSE TRUCE

Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 14 Mar 84 pp 1, 4

[Text] NEW DELHI, India (Dispatches)--Soviet occupation troops in Afghanistan have moved in SU-25 jet fighters after negotiations with guerilles for a truce in a strategic valley northwest of Kabul broke down, a Western diplomat here said yesterday.

The fixed-wing sub-sonic aircraft were used in 1982 to effectively crush insurgent activity in the Panjsher Valley, where residents are expecting major Soviet offensives soon.

Quoting reports from Kabul, the Afghan capital, the diplomat said ceasefire talks betw-en Soviet troops and Afghanistan's renowned guerilla leader Mohammad Shan Masoud broke down in mid-February.

The Panjsher Valley is a traditional resistance strong-hold which the Soviet troops, estimated at 105,000 have failed to bring under their total control since they entered the West Asian country.

Mujahideen on March 8 staged what the diplomat described as "the most spectacular" attack in eight months on the Afghan Army 8th Division Headquarters in Karga Lake.

The attack came two hours after the Soviet-backed Babrak Karmal regime announced on state-run radio and television that enlisted men would serve four years instead of three.

The announcement reportedly caused a mutiny and the diplomat said some sources claimed Mujahideen were "drawn" to help the soldiers in their uprising.

The attack reportedly inflicted heavy damage to the army base, southwest of Kabul, and caused an unspecified number of casualties, said the diplomat without giving further details.

Meanwhile evacuation of the non-combatant Afghans from the Panjsher Valley, ordered by the local guerillas commander, Ahmad Shah Masood, two weeks ago, continues.

Masood reportedly turned down the Soviet offer to withdraw their garrison at Anawa, permitted under the truce terms, in return for an extension of the ceasefire.

Instead he wanted the ceasefire to be extended beyond the Panjshir Valley to include all the Shomali region, Kohistan and parts of Badakhshan Province--all areas adjoining the valley which were subjected to intensive Soviet air and ground operations in recent months.

Masood was also reported to have asked for assistance from other guerilla groups in the event the Soviets launched their much speculated attack on the valley.

CSO: 4600/454

INTERVIEW OF AFGHAN RESISTANCE LEADER

Brussels KNACK in Dutch 19 Oct 83 pp 107-108

[Interview with Resistance Leader Moulvi Fateh Mohammad Khan by S.V.E.:
"Your Information Is Not Entirely Correct"; date and place not given]

[Text] Interview with Moulvi Fateh Mohammad Khan,
a somewhat nebulous Afghan resistance leader, who is
traveling through Europe on a search for assistance.

Moulvi Fateh Mohammad Khan is his name; he is short and stocky and not very old (his beard is still jet-black); he strides into rooms in all the dignity of his white Afghan clothes, his turban well arranged, as is customary. He is arriving straight from Afghanistan in order to travel through Europe and inform the people about the Afghan war ("victory is close") and the Soviet danger which is threatening the Free West. He prefers not to sit on a chair; if at all possible, could the entire company sit on the floor perhaps? As if to prove that the company has more than one string to its bow, everyone collectively sits on the wall-to-wall carpeting, in spite of the fact that it is known that whoever visits the resistance organizations in Peshawar is offered chairs and that over there one won't see anyone sitting on the floor.

However, the best is yet to come: Moulvi Fateh Mohammad Khan was delegated by a master alliance of the Afghan resistance, he says. In a letter he calls it the "Afghan Mujaheddin" (Freedom Fighters). His alliance, which he labels "moderate," but which later in the conversation turns out to include all the groups of the Afghan resistance--thus also the "fundamentalists" of the hard Iranian line--he claims is called "the Islamic Alliance of the Afghan Mujaheddin" and is busy with the forming of a government in exile in order to obtain a united political influence. The fact is known that this is a pious wish which the Afghan resistance organizations have had for a long time already; in February of this year there were already two loose alliances, each mainly including three resistance organizations. Those were in fact precisely the "fundamentalists" and the "moderates." The trouble with Moulvi Khan (as we'll call him from now on) is that, first, he claims that his all-embracing alliance has included all the various groups for 1 and 1/2 years already and, second, that it turns out to be impossible during the entire conversation to find out which resistance organization he himself belongs to, or even who sent him to Europe.

He comfortably handles the well-known Western anti-Soviet prejudices, very much in the manner of the kind of talk doing the rounds in cafes in Peshawar, but he has not much concrete information to report. Well, things don't really have to be that bad; nothing much has changed in the Afghan situation in the past 9 months, and it won't hurt to simply refresh people's memory of the old situation. It is true that the Afghans need help; millions of refugees including old men, women and children, are huddled together in the Pakistan refugee camps (not to mention the Iranian refugee camps about which much less is known). It is just as true that his adherence to an organization might be a diplomatic courtesy secret (for example in order not to "offend" the other organizations) and that the alliance is indeed so strong as a wish-dream that in Europe it can seem almost tangible.

Thus such a man is not necessarily lying all the time; he might merely be anticipating the facts a little. And that exaggeration with that "Eastern" act perhaps is indeed an efficient method of impressing Westerners, in which case it is of course legitimate. One simply doesn't know. That is the problem: anything is possible.

The State of Alliance

[Question] The "moderate" wing of the Afghan resistance used to be composed of roughly three groups. Which of the three do you belong to?

Moulvi Fateh Mohammad Khan: Your information is not entirely correct; there were more than three groups. I represent the Islamic Alliance of Mujaheddin. We have already formed an alliance, and I am a representative, a leader of that alliance.

[Question] How many groups are in that alliance and which ones?

Moulvi Khan: That alliance groups together many tribes--not necessarily groups--but many tribes in the resistance.

[Question] Roughly how many belong to the resistance? A quarter? Half?

Moulvi Khan: We represent the entire province of Paktia, a province along the border of Pakistan; it is a very important province. These days all parties and groups agree and are united in one single goal: the overthrow of the government. For that matter, that's what we named the alliance after: the alliance for the overthrow of the government. Everyone agrees on that, regardless of the differences of opinion which existed in the past.

[Question] Also the groups which used to be called fundamentalist?

Moulvi Khan: All the groups; we no longer make any distinctions. Everyone is in the alliance; there is no one who claims to be in the alliance who is not.

[Question] And when did that alliance come into being?

Moulvi Khan: A year and a half ago.

[Question] What exactly is your mission in Europe?

Moulvi Khan: I came to educate the general public about what is happening in Afghanistan. The people know there is a war, but they do not have a precise picture of it. The Soviets attack small villages and murder women, children and old men; they destroy the harvests, so that sometimes there is even starvation, and there is a great lack of medication for the wounded.

[Question] And militarily?

Moulvi Khan: In Paktia, for example, we attacked a military base where we destroyed five Soviet MIGs on the ground. We had been planning that for a long time, but we didn't carry it out till last week. Since I left Afghanistan at the beginning of September, we have destroyed 15 tanks in one attack and launched an attack against a barracks of Soviet soldiers, killing several hundred. In Paktia we attacked three more barracks with Soviets and government troops, which was a complete victory for us because they have communication problems with Kabul which hinders the supply of military aid. Right now we are winning in the entire territory, and we hope that the war will be only a matter of days now. We are making progress every day. The very important province of Paktia, a strategic point for the war, is entirely under our control.

[Question] Why is that province so important?

Moulvi Khan: For three reasons. First, because it borders on Pakistan, so that the resistance can easily flee to Pakistan and then return. Second, because it borders a province which is independent as it were, being controlled neither by Afghanistan nor by Pakistan; that is the province of Waziristan, and the tribes there are aiding the resistance. Third, because it is a mountainous province, and the mujheddin can escape into the mountains, making it difficult for the army to follow them. And also because Paktia is inhabited by old, very combative tribes who already caused the overthrow of the king four times--the last kings Afghanistan has had. And no matter how long it takes, they will get the current government too.

[Question] In spite of Paktia, saying that the victory might take place one of these days amounts to minimalizing the Soviet army, doesn't it?

Moulvi Khan: At the beginning, after the invasion, there were Soviet troops everywhere in Afghanistan. For the time being they have withdrawn to Kabul and ensconced themselves in barracks surrounded by mine fields, for fear we will attack them. Now they no longer attack us, but they bomb the civilian population in the villages. Neither the government nor the Soviets have any influence on the population because the entire population is in the resistance. That is why they burn the villages and harvests.

[Question] What indications are there that the Soviets are politically discouraged, not militarily?

Moulvi Khan: Even the Soviet people are no longer happy with the war in Afghanistan. I don't believe they will send additional troops since their people would not agree with that.

[Question] The Soviet Union is willing to negotiate on Afghanistan with the United States, Pakistan, etc. but not with the resistance movement. Thus far that has been facilitated by the division within the resistance. Is the latter going toward a political union now, so that the resistance can be recognized as a political partner?

Moulvi Khan: It is true that we are now united in the alliance, and in the future we want to establish an interim government in which all currents are represented; perhaps we can work out a basis of negotiation then. That government is in the making, but because of the difficult contacts in the country it might still take some time. You know, of course, that the first thing the Soviets did after they had the Khalq party established in Afghanistan was to murder a great number of Afghan communists even though those were on their side. That was because Soviets had been killed in Afghan riots under previous governments. They had Daou, also a communist, murdered as well as Taraki, Hafizullah Amin, etc. The Soviet policy for communists who are on their side in other countries is not at all satisfactory. They merely play with them, like a child with dolls. They bring communists to power and eliminate them afterward, and then they bring others to power who are then killed in turn, etc. You see that in all communist countries which are on the Soviets' side. Surely that is not a good policy?

[Question] One can say the same for the regime in Iran, can't one?

Moulvi Khan: Yes, that is the same.

Photo Captions

p. 107 Moulvi Fateh Mohammad Khan: according to him the alliance has already existed for 1 and 1/2 years.

p. 108 Moulvi Khan: We hope that the war is only a matter of days now.

8700

CSO: 8114/0828

AFGHAN GOVERNMENT HARDENS CONSCRIPTION RULES

Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 10 Mar 84 p 1

[Text]

ISLAMABAD, March 9 (Dispatches) — The Afghan regime hardened conscription rules yesterday and extended the system to take in government employees in addition to all young people, Radio Kabul reported.

Even high school graduates and school-leavers would now be required to complete a two-year term in the Afghan Army, it said. It added that army personnel in the central government must continue for four years, while those engaged in the provinces must stay for three years.

The regime, facing Muslim resistance to communist rule, has repeatedly changed the rules in the past four years to beef up its armed forces — reportedly depleted by desertions and defections earlier, it set the draft age at 18, but reports from Kabul quoted by Western diplomatic sources said the regime failed to achieve its target and Afghan youths were dodging the massive conscription drive or fleeing the country.

However, a new communique issued by the defense

ministry further amended the laws empowering the government to recruit students for two years of army service. Even students who failed to maintain the required standard in education will not be spared in future and cannot claim exemption, it said.

The government has warned draft-dodgers and people attempting to desert from the army that they will be subject to severe disciplinary action, the radio said.

The new law also authorizes various government departments to recruit employees and other ministerial staff for two years of military duty even if they have completed the compulsory period in the army. These persons can be posted anywhere in the country in defense services, Radio Kabul said.

The radio, which promised earlier this year that Afghan youths would be offered housing plots in urban areas on completion of military service, announced an increased salary for the conscripts yesterday.

ALGERIAN-IRANIAN TALKS COVER WORLD ISSUES, MUTUAL TIES

Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 14 Mar 84 p 1

[Text]

ALGIERS (IRNA)— Iran's Foreign Minister Dr Ali Akbar Velayati met and held talks with Algeria's President of the National Assembly Rabah Bitat here Monday.

In his talks with the Algerian official, Dr Velayati said that Majlis (the Islamic Consultative Assembly) plays a crucial role in the administration of the affairs of the country.

He said that Imam Khomeini and other ranking officials regard the Majlis as a principal pillar of the government.

The president of the National Assembly of Algeria welcomed the visit to Algiers by Dr. Velayati as head of visiting Iranian delegation, and noted that in April this year deputies from 27 African Parliaments would convene in Algiers which meeting would be of consequence to the destiny of the African people.

The Algerian official also expressed his best wishes to Iran's Majlis Speaker Hashemi Rafsanjani.

Meanwhile, Velayati visited monument of Algeria's Martyrs in Algiers where he placed a wreath of flowers on the martyrs' tomb. A number of Algerian officials and the ambassador of Islamic

Republic of Iran Mohammad Mehdi Karrani accompanied the two countries' ministers.

Meanwhile, Velayati told IRNA here, that in talks with his Algerian counterpart, Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi, political issues of the Islamic and Third World countries were discussed.

He said that in-depth talks were held on problems facing African states, who are increasingly becoming victims of the Superpowers' plots, singling out especially those of the U.S. and Zionists to make certain African countries their satellites.

Both sides mutually agreed to work to eliminate this danger. Velayati added that the shadow of expansion of nuclear arms to the Third World and installation of medium range nuclear weapons were other issues discussed between the two sides.

The Iranian foreign minister said also that Third World countries were the principal victims of arms race of East and West, adding only through reliance on Islam could these oppressed confront such an issue.

He said also that the Algiers Accord and the U.S. contravention of regulations at

the Hague was discussed with the Algerian foreign minister.

Also discussed in the meeting, Velayati said, was economic ties between two countries further saying that positive steps have already been taken in this field.

He said that both sides expressed the hope that the exchange of technical and agricultural cooperation would pave the way for strengthening of bilateral economic relations.

Velayati said, too, that committees would be formed to follow up technical issues.

Concerning the expansion of cultural relations between Iran and Algeria, Velayati said that a draft of a Letter of Understanding was signed and hoped with efforts of the two sides preliminary agreements would be implemented.

Relations between Iran and Algeria rapidly improved in the wake of the culmination of the Islamic Revolution. In March 1979, Chadli Benjedid's envoy, Mouloud Qassem visited Tehran and met and held talks with Imam Khomeini and other Iranian officials. On that occasion he conveyed the good wishes of Algeria's government and its people to the Iranians for the triumph of the Islamic Revolution.